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FICTION FIGHTS THE CIVIL WAR *By Bernard DeVoto*

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CIVIL WAR NOVELISTS

Top: James Boyd, Margaret Mitchell, MacKinlay Kantor. Bottom: Andrew Lytle, Caroline Gordon, Clifford Dowdey.

"We have lived through a war, and it is our bitter knowledge projected backwards that has produced these novels"

. . . *(See page 15)*

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MACMILLAN

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Fiction Fights the Civil War

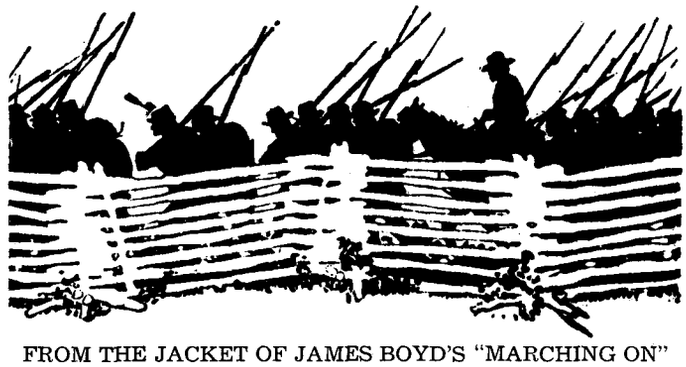
BY BERNARD DEVOTO

AT A TIME when the sales of one novel alone read like a statistician's effort to state the national deficit in round numbers, everyone must be aware that the Civil War has become profitable material for fiction. Yet the fact that "Gone with the Wind" has sold as widely as Old Gold cigarettes is not of itself very important. Other novels have sold in astronomical figures in our own time, and in the seventy-two years since Appomattox other Civil War novels have sometimes approached the popularity of Miss Mitchell's. More important to the critic are other facts which the furore of the best seller has tended to obscure. "Gone with the Wind" is only one, and is far from the best one, of a number of recent novels based on the Civil War. There have been so many of them that we may regard them as a wave or a cycle. That is an important literary and social fact. More important is the fact that, taken in the round, they express a point of view toward the Civil War which, if not new, is at least new to literature. In any period, historical fiction tends to conform to the dominant modes and values of the period—though the historical novel has usually been conservative and conventional. The present cycle is the more interesting to criticism in that it occurs during a period predominantly realistic and seriously concerned with social values.

It would be interesting to speculate about the social meaning of fiction's current preoccupation with the Civil War. Surely it signifies, in one aspect, an increased self-consciousness about our past; surely, in another aspect, a deep desire to understand our present. The Civil War was the greatest strain that has ever been put on the structure of our national life. Taking it all in all, everything that went into it and everything that came out of it, it was the most important event in the history of the United States.

Ever since it ended, it has been a recurrent occupation of our fiction. Our generation is examining it with the instruments most familiar to our hands, determined to wring from it whatever significance it contains for what we are and what we are to be. We shall not be too arbitrary if we call the present one the fourth cycle of Civil War novels, each one of them composed of novels more or less alike in sentiments, values, and manner.

The first wave of Civil War fiction came before the form of the modern American novel was shaped by Howells, Henry James, and Mark Twain. The novels that compose it are pretty bad and mostly very dull, and they seem as antique now as the candle snuffers that hang by your fireplace. Mostly it was a Northern wave. Mostly it was phrased in moral terms, as if secession had something in common with drunkenness or falsifying tax returns. Mostly it was conciliatory, issuing a stern reproof to the Confederacy but announcing that its sins are forgiven, every drop of blood drawn by the lash having been paid for by one drawn by the pen. There is not much battle in these novels; there are more love scenes. And all but universally they yield to the commonest weakness of historical fiction, a vulgar tendency to demonstrate that the great processes of history are important chiefly as they may be made a mechanism for a romantic love story. Nevertheless, the critic will grant them some virtue. They do assert something about the horror and waste of war, and they are very near the people, nearer than their immediate successors. If they are sentimental and superficial in thinking about war, why, so are most of the people who take part in one, so was their audience.



FROM THE JACKET OF JAMES BOYD'S "MARCHING ON"
"The war narrows to a few men splendidly realized."

Twenty years later the censorious but forgiving North had been displaced by the glamorous Southland. We must except an occasional realistic or skeptical novel that was not stifled by the fumes of honeysuckle, but primarily this second cycle is that of the Lost Cause. This is a literature of dream restoring the vanished way of life. It involves not an emotional accord, but the compulsion of a dream, of a frustrated dream, born after defeat, shaped by nostalgia and pathos, a neurotic compensation, and a sentimental indulgence. An aristocracy perishes and too late truth rises again while error dies among her worshippers, and manly hearts bleed and noble tears flow while violins play offstage or—in Thomas Nelson Page—on the stage. Were there, the exasperated reader wants to shout, only noble passions in this war? Was there no madness, no hysteria, no panic? . . . It seems not, and the Southern symbols carried the field. Northern writers came to reverence the romantic myth, and the Northern cause disappeared from fiction for a quarter of a century.

So far Civil War fiction has had only such elementary psychology as gets into oratory, and has had nothing which, today, we should call realism. Realistic psychological fiction arrived in 1895 in an isolated masterpiece which was to have little literary influence for another generation. Stephen Crane's "Red Badge of Courage" shows vividly how critical categories fail and how complex are the problems we are dealing with. Surely it is a historical novel for, published in 1895, it is set in the battle of Chancellorsville. But neither the processes nor the events of history have any part in it, and Chancellorsville might as easily have been any battle in any war. For "The Red Badge of Courage" is a portrayal of an individual in battle—what he felt, what he thought, what he did—and it is nothing more. Its theme is a man in battle, as another novel's theme might be a man in marriage or in business or in the church. We cannot properly call it a Civil War novel. But it established a way of writing about battle that in our own time has had a decisive influence. Whenever, in fiction of the last ten years, a Civil War battle crosses the story's path you may see Stephen Crane's seal on it. In making the individual the conscious, sentient focus

Next Week

FADE OUT
By NAOMI JACOB
Reviewed by Theodore Purdy, Jr.

TO A YOUNG WRETCH: A POEM
By ROBERT FROST

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of battle scenes he did a great service to our fiction. We might well raise the question whether he did not also do it a disservice in leading fiction to ignore the battle experience, the battle emotions, of men in groups.

Let us now leap from 1895 to 1911. We must skip a minor resurgence of Civil War fiction, including Winston Churchill's "The Crisis," which, in 1901, had a popularity comparable to that of "Gone with the Wind" today. We can better examine the novels of today against the background of work far better than "The Crisis" but quite as obsolete.

Mary Johnston's "The Long Roll" and "Cease Firing," though published a year apart, are really one novel, and it should be noted that they add up to about three hundred pages more than "Gone with the Wind." They were a new kind of Civil War fiction. "The Crisis" had been a comprehensive novel in that it touched many of the dramatic crises of the war, the hero having a knack of turning up everywhere from ex-Captain Grant's woodyard and ex-Captain Sherman's promenades in 1860 to Ford's Theater on Good Friday, 1865. But Miss Johnston produced a genuine panorama of the war. Her two novels which, as I say, are one, are devoted to the Stonewall Brigade, the first from the secession of Virginia to Jackson's death at Chancellorsville, the second from the invasion of Pennsylvania to Appomattox, or rather the road to Appomattox, since she could not bring herself to picture the surrender. With the exception of the first two years in the West (where, you will remember, the defeat of the Confederacy began) and the trans-Mississippi campaign of 1864, the book gives a comprehensive and pretty detailed military history of the war. By detaching various characters from the Stonewall Brigade, she manages to give us New Orleans, Mobile, the *Monitor* and *Merrimac*, Port Gibson and Vicksburg, a northern prison, Chickamauga and Chattanooga, the march to Atlanta and part of the March to the Sea, as well as the complete campaigns of the Army of Northern Virginia. As military history it is accurate and frequently minute. The intent and emphasis of the book are always focused on the campaigns, but there is also a vigorous effort to characterize the civilian Confederacy as well.

This is surely an ambitious work, but it nevertheless seems to us now an ambitious failure. The reasons why it seems a failure reveal important principles of historical fiction. For one thing, the effort is too ambitious: no single book can contain the whole Confederacy. For another, though Miss Johnston was a flame of patriotic sentiment, she was not a good novelist, and it is far better, in historical novels, to be expert than to be impassioned. But most of all, she shows the weakness which is so common in historical fiction that it may be called the occupational risk. Realistic in details, she is victimized by a lush Southern romanticism which dominates her understanding and portrayal of character.

Note that this is not said in objection to her special pleading for the South. In novels presenting the Southern cause one expects Southern sentiments, Southern passions and prejudices, a pattern and organization of feeling conditioned by the experience and the phantasies of the South. But one grows tired of the romantic conception of war and its inevitable result, the glorification of battle. Yet that is the least important objection to Miss Johnston's novel. A graver flaw is her unquestioning acceptance of the Lost Cause myth, the perfect society dominated by an aristocracy of noble souls and supported by a yeomanry of docile and satisfied souls. Surely, one thinks, surely the South at war was something more than some oratorical demigods sweating nobility in high office, a universal officer caste of Jeb Stuarts with plumes waving in the camera lens, and some tableaus of heroic maidenhood ever loyal and as inviolable as the battle flags of the First Virginia Cavalry. Surely war has its degradation and disintegration. Surely a nation is also people.

These objections sum up to a requirement that historical fiction use the instruments which other kinds of fiction have developed. Specifically they ask the historical novel to be realistic, to be psychologically valid, and to be socially aware. And that is the kind of novel that the present cycle has produced.

The larger part of this new cycle is devoted to the Confederacy. It is an interesting social comment that the Yankee novels, fewest in number, are most offhand and realistic about the war. Thus Mr. McKinlay Kantor uses the war primarily as a setting and mechanism for individual experience. The central figures of "Long Remember" are noncombatants, and the hero is even a conscientious objector. Its theme is the effect on passionate experience of nearness to and presence in a great battle. It is a study of individual psychology affected by a single aspect of war. Mr. Kantor's "Arouse and Beware" is still more indifferent to battles and the literary tradition of war. War provides the mechanism, the escape from a prison and the violence through which the narrative moves, but again the essence of the novel is the experience of three individuals confronting emergencies in a desperate effort to save their lives. Mr. Kantor is using the historical material as he would use contemporary material in a novel of contemporary life. His passionate lovers might be similarly endangered by an epidemic in 1937, or his three fleeing people might face menace and failure in the unemployment and panic of a few years ago.

This sort of thing means a considerable change in the novel. It is not only realism in war, it is realism about war. Mr. Kantor's soldiers and noncombatants are people as we meet them in realistic novels. They have head colds, hernias, personal animosities; they experience fatigue and their wounds get infected. They enjoy war, they hate war, they are bored by war, they endure war; they do not dramatize it and utter apostrophes about it. Such a casual novel as Royce Brier's "Boy in Blue" shows by its very assumptions the extent of the change. It is the career in war of an Ohio farm boy—before enlistment, as a recruit, in camp, on garrison duty, on furlough, in battle, in hospital, back at home. Much of its emphasis is laid on the hatred that grows up behind the lines, and we are shown the godly and intolerant folk who help to produce war, the development of mass hysteria and mob violence, professional veterans buying votes with their scars, and many other ugly accompaniments of

(*Continued on page* 15)

FROM THE JACKET OF "BUGLES BLOW NO MORE," BY CLIFFORD DOWDEY

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Mime's Mirror

FIRST PERSON PLURAL. By Angna Enters. New York: Stackpole Sons. 1937. $4.

Reviewed by JENNY BALLOU

WHEN Anita Enters resolved to become Angna Enters, she received little encouragement from her theater colleagues—if she may be said to have any. What made her believe that simply by sitting high with a rose in her palms, by walking up and down, by taking a step or two in a certain costume; or by plucking an instrument, or by a far-away tinkle of finger cymbals, she could hold an audience all by herself for a full evening? How did she know in her mime *La Jeune Fille de la Renaissance* that a girl in the fifteenth century held her head like that; or in *Promenade* that a young woman walking in the park during the Impressionist period would move that way? What certificate had she to offer of the emotion and manner of her *Boy Cardinal*? Perhaps the authoritarians secretly looked up "mime" in the dictionary, only to find: "A mimic play or farce; a dramatic representation akin to comedy; travestying real persons or events; a favorite pastime among the Greeks and Romans." Somehow that did not explain Angna Enters. As to "composition in movement" or "dance form," Miss Enters herself had not yet coined these random definitions of the undefinable, when a literal colleague called her on the telephone, after a performance, to inform her she was sorry but that wasn't dancing.

But the telephone call was wasted. Miss Enters did not bother explaining herself; she had borrowed a reluctant twenty-five dollars, skipped all the usual intermediaries of a career, and gone straight before those who give the final verdict: her public. They did not have to peer into dictionaries, perplex themselves over forgotten Greek history, or worry about whether this was revival or prophecy. They enjoyed themselves. And Miss Enters, with pride, records as one of her first and lasting triumphs that a baseball reporter sent by the *New York Evening World* recommended her show as "all right."

Knowing this theater to be all right, we may now learn the origin of the images that have held and moved us. With a born dancer's equilibrium Miss Enters has balanced the personal with the abstract, the subjective with the essential. It is straight stuff, right from the lap of experience. "And so if my theme didn't require me to dance, I didn't; and if it called upon me to dance a few steps, play an instrument, I did." Miss Enters has applied this same idea in her writing; when it suits the form of her impersonal personal history to use diary notes of studies in painting and history made as a Guggenheim Fellow during her travels, she does not hesitate. We learn that what has enchanted us in her mosaics has been tested in historical laboratories; that there is not a pause or gesture that has not been doubly timed. Of her lighter mimes, one may say, as Nietzsche said of the Greeks, that they are superficial from profoundness. And now the authoritarians may relent and enjoy, even while the true origin of this art was in the mirror.

For it was painting that drew Miss Enters to mime, and it was her mime that in turn brought fresh vision to her painting. "Working directly with myself as a medium instead of with brush on canvas

ANGNA ENTERS
"Court of Love—Seventeenth Century."

might solve a lack of approach—just as now the study of painting seems to help me in the study of form in movement." In knowing how to look into the mirror, the mime reveals the face of our own time; and through this same act of abstract concentration is able, with a nuanced glance, to convey the essence of a past epoch.

In "First Person Plural" Angna Enters has crossed the footlights without breaking the spell. And she speaks not only as an artist in this autobiography of her mimes and herself, "but as a person about persons." With her, theories came after experience, learning only confirmed dramatic instinct; "When I had my first hunch for what became my personal theatre, I didn't know I was working in an ancient tradition. . . . In my approaches I never have accepted as valid any of the laws handed down rigidly classifying and drawing boundary lines between the forms in the theatre arts." In remaining true to her hunches, Miss Enters has struck a resonant note in American esthetics.

Jenny Ballou is the author of "Spanish Prelude." See page 18 for biographical note on Angna Enters.

The Case for China

I SPEAK FOR THE CHINESE. By Carl Crow. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1937. $1.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

THOSE who recognize this little book for what it is will salute its author for his superb presentation of a case which, in less unqualified form, would be disputed by few individuals. For Mr. Crow, fresh from the triumph of his delightful "400 Million Customers," has turned his attention to the Sino-Japanese conflict. He writes with authority. He has headed an advertising agency in Shanghai for a quarter of a century, was employed by the United States as a propagandist in China during the World War, and saw similar service some years later as director of an anti-communist campaign financed by foreign business men in Shanghai. Small wonder, then, that he wields a well informed and subtly persuasive pen.

For the most part "I Speak for the Chinese" is the apparent truth, presented with such a combination of emphasis and omission, such nuance of phrasing, that the reader's latent conviction of Chinese innocence and Japanese guilt is immeasurably strengthened. To a sober student Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese government would scarcely appear in so favorable a light, nor the Japanese in such unmitigated darkness. One wonders why Mr. Crow has nowhere reminded us that imperialism in China has not been exclusively a Japanese and German phenomenon. One wonders why the Chinese currency reform of 1935 is described without reference to the American silver purchase policy which made it necessary—a course which would involve untoward reflections on the conduct of the United States —although Japan is justly pilloried for its attempt to sabotage that reform.

Indeed, the attitude of the United States is mentioned only twice, but in both instances with obvious intent. In a discussion of the sequel to the Manchurian crisis reference is made to "that large part of the American public which is willing to see injustice committed in other parts of the world so long as America can enjoy a cowardly peace"; and in the present conflict the Japanese militarists are said

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to have relied on "the peace-at-any-price Americans who virtuously sidestep present problems for future generations to settle." What Mr. Crow would have us think is clear enough; what he would have us do is only a shade less clear. The Japanese, he asserts, have a unique moral code which makes it impossible to judge their ruthlessness and their objectives by our own standards. They believe in their manifest destiny, in their divinely ordained mission to impose Japanese civilization on the world. So-called self-defense impelled them to move westward to Korea, Manchuria, North China, and Mongolia. Next will come China, then Hongkong, the Indies, and the Philippines —"a series of vicious consequences to which there can be no logical end. After China, what?"

Shades of 1917, Prussianism, and the Hun!

David H. Popper is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association. See page 18 for biographical note on Carl Crow.

From Pet Child to Potential Foe

FORTY YEARS OF AMERICAN-JAPANESE RELATIONS. By Foster Rhea Dulles. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by ALBERT PARRY

THE taking of the Philippines was the first and last earnest show of American force in the Far East. From then on to this day our policy in the Orient has consisted of protests and cajoling unbacked by any stiffness in either tone or act. Our present-day withdrawal from the isles, our general passiveness in China, and our helplessness in the face of Japan, are logical results of this policy.

Such seems to be the sound thesis of Mr. Dulles, who in the new volume continues the good work begun in his "Old China Trade" and "America in the Pacific." On the basis of thorough scholarship, enlivened by personal experience in the Far East, he proves that search of the exotic as well as lure of profit brought Americans to China and Japan; that, although the Open Door was meant primarily to safeguard their commercial supremacy, it made a great hit with our people mostly for sentimental reasons. He points out that dollar diplomacy was never really supported by the people of the United States whose stake in the Orient was small.

Mr. Dulles rightly feels that America's withdrawal from the Orient, although a fact, is not quite final, and that no one can say what the future may bring. Nevertheless his book, as the events unfold, will prove a most valuable aid in comprehending the forces that have made the yesterdays and this day and are already subtly sculpting the morrow.

The Unequal Sections

DIVIDED WE STAND: The Crisis of a Frontierless Democracy. By Walter Prescott Webb. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN CROWE RANSOM

WE all know about the inequalities in the economic structure. But there is one painful feature of this economic inequality which nobody, least of all the personnel of an American government, likes to dwell upon publicly. It is partly an inequality among the geographic sections. Within the Northern states you have your masters of capital on the one hand, and against them your farmers and employees trying to keep a foothold in the economic society. But as for the South and the West, you have almost your whole populations in this latter status, the masters of their capital being in the North. The North owns and operates the national economy; the South and West work under its direction; that is, they work to the extent that work is found for them within the system.

WALTER P. WEBB

And here a distinguished Texas professor of American history produces a book of which the merit and the boldness alike consist in examining the great American inequality as a historian and a geographer, that is, in its obvious sectional terms. Professor Webb has pulled none of his punches, as his publishers say, but there is nothing petty and hateful in his spirit. His argument is realistic and valid, it is inevitable, it is long overdue. He represents an unreconstructed South and an unassimilated West, but he seems prepared to accept any reasonable settlement of his grievances.

It is not out of pure malice that the North, with less than a fourth the total area (as Professor Webb defines the North) and a little better than half the total population, owns eighty or ninety percent, or more, of the wealth of the United States. If a few Northerners tend to be as complacent as many Southerners and Westerners are restive in this situation, nevertheless conspiracy is too easy to say and too hard to find. A very broad train of history is involved. The West bears a colonial relation to the North because the North actually colonized the West. The South bears it because the South's own economy was upset by force, and then within the dominant new industrial economy the South's actual position was distant from the center or, virtually, colonial. Few people realized it at the time, but the South was destroyed because it resisted the protective tariff and the rise of economic nationalism. If we waive all the moral questions, as history generally must do, the South opposed itself to what most economists today would call destiny. Perhaps it was destiny that the industrial revolution should concentrate its power in the North and dispense its favors colonially to the other sections. But evidently it was destiny also that in the natural tendency to centralization it should overreach itself and crash; and promise to wind up in stoppage and rust unless a vast and perfectly willful majority of electors undertook by law to enforce some decentralization; which they might do in the name of individual rights, but again might do almost as effectively in the name of the unequal sections. The Constitution of the United States had provided against just such emergencies that the electorate could express itself whenever it liked.

The corrective action of the democratic will must be directed, according to Professor Webb, who loses few tricks for lack of economic understanding, to the control of that most brilliant and anomalous of births within the American system, the corporation with the rights of a person. And as to being deterred by its cries of pain, if there must be a competitive crying to see where justice lies, the farmers and laborers can make a great noise, and so can the West and the South. In his view, it is principally the corporate device, operated by owners in the North, which is "developing" the South and the West, and exacting tribute for the job. This is a work in which it may be said that a motive of missionary benevolence sometimes sanctifies the stern urge for commercial profits. But many persons both South and West have a disrelish for being morally improved and financially worked at the same time, or even for being subjected to these processes separately. Some of this feeling will shine through Professor Webb's even-tempered exposition. His tone is not technically that of urbanity, but something just as ripe: it is the tone of homely country lecture-talk, as produced in some communities which are tolerably patient, polite, and humorous, and more realistic and stubborn than missionaries are likely to imagine.

This book is a contribution of great im-

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portance for our public discussions, if they propose to be full and frank ones. I am inclined to think it has prophetic value, in the sense in which certain features of three New Deal landslides in as many successive elections had that value. The South and the West do not become more comfortable under the economic dominion of the North. The Constitution has given them plenty of power to relax it.

John Crowe Ransom is professor of English at Vanderbilt University.

East London Swamp

THE MARSH. By Ernest Raymond. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

"HERE, then, are the two cities: the city of the masters in the security of the hills, and the city of those who live on the lowland, very close to danger, destitution and death." This is London, and Danny Counsel belonged to the lowlands, or the Marsh, and specifically to that part of the Marsh which is called East London. His father was a London dock laborer, and the only future which Danny could see for himself was a future on the dole.

Odd jobs—he was a personable youth, and was therefore able to get them occasionally—could not keep his girl faithful to him when her favors were being solicited by somebody who had climbed into the white collar class. Danny took this with bitterness, but did not see exactly where to place the blame. And then, drifting into a socialist parade, it occurred to him for the first time that wealth might have been withheld from him, not because he did not deserve it, but because he had not been born into it. And it was this piece of rudimentary thinking which, combined with the loss of one girl and his need to find another, ultimately made him an expert thief, led him into prison, and finally left him mortally wounded in a dark alley.

Mr. Raymond's resolute sense of the unresolved injustice between the city on the hills and the city in the marsh, gives this novel its unity. Otherwise he is always at his best when exposing the bewilderment and hypocrisy of his middle-class characters, who are always clearer in the imagination than Danny or Danny's companions.

Mr. Raymond seems to have lived more in his own mind than in Danny's; and that is perhaps why, when you have finished the book, what remains with you is more likely to be a sense of the principles than of the persons involved. But that sense will have been firmly planted. For the author exposes with unremitting intensity the fact that there is little mercy and less understanding in the agents of the city on the hills; and little hope for those who play a lone hand in the city on the marsh.

Three American Poets

THE LAST LOOK AND OTHER POEMS. By Mark Van Doren. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1937. $2.

THE GREAT HORSE. By Helene Magaret. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc. 1937. $2.

YEAR'S END. By Josephine W. Johnson. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

WE need no proof today that there is a poetry characteristically American; these three books, all different in character and in method, seem so to me, and reflect credit upon the states of Illinois, Nebraska, and Missouri, in which states, respectively, the authors were born. Mr. Van Doren, although born on a Middlewestern farm, has in his poetry breathed more the spirit of New England, from his own farm of today in the hills of Connecticut. He has learned from Robert Frost. But his own character and insight have now become deeply impressed upon verse of distinction. He has looked long at country landscapes and people, and has meditated upon them profitably in lyrical narrative that has its appropriate rhythms. Half a dozen books of shorter poems, and one long narrative, "Jonathan Gentry," attest his power. This latest volume is characteristic, and contains memorable work. He and Miss Johnson are the most subtle of these three poets, and both accomplished in their craft. Some of Mr. Van Doren's present poems go back in memory to "the dun, low western house," —a simple and beautiful poem of family voices remembered—to the old cornetist they called "the Frisco nightingale," to old men dying, a neighbor girl, the little doctor, the ghost horse, Uncle Roger, and a boy's first ride in a train. Perhaps "The Letter" is the best of this type, simple and yet with superbly adroit phrase that John Donne himself might have commended. In the space allowed me it is hard to give a complete idea of this volume, because it is varied, there are five sections, and over seventy poems. It is not to be read complete in an hour, and there are obscurities which spring, it seems to me, from subtlety of apprehension rather than from confusion of thought. The spirit in this poet is sensitive and fine, nor does it despise a strong earthiness mixed with bitterness and wit. He is worth your acquaintance.

Helene Magaret of Nebraska produced an unusual narrative in "The Trumpeting Crane." Now, in the westward migration of the Mormons following the killing of Joseph Smith, she has found a powerful theme, the wild horse of the American dream being its symbol, the story that of the wagons of the Latter-day Saints rolling westward from Nauvoo. Specifically,

JOSEPHINE W. JOHNSON

the tale concerns Lucinda Holman who seeks for westward freedom, chafing at a fanatic faith. Finally she finds her satisfying love in a frontier doctor. There are other saliently drawn characters, the clash of lives, desperation, perseverance, and drama. The background is well-studied and made vivid. The poem is written in rhymed loose pentameter, with a few interludes of a simple ballad measure. Sometimes the verse stiffens and seems awkwardly constrained, but for the most part this is good work of a different kind.

Josephine Winslow Johnson is, of course, the brilliant young novelist who won the Pulitzer Prize two years ago with "Now in November." Her "Year's End" is a notable book. In free verse, unrhymed or rhymed, the poem's rhythm fits its statement, and she speaks out of the experience of love and life with an individual voice. These forty-seven poems, of various lengths, all have something to say, and her manner of saying it is her own. "The White Spring," "Final Autumn," "Under the Sound of Voices," and the long poem last in the book called "Year's End," are impressive; and some of the shorter ones contain considerable sapience. Neither can one read "In This Hour" or "This Wind That Rises" without hearing the voice of the bitter present speaking in an inexorable tone. There is salt in this verse. It is realistic and unhoodwinked. Sometimes the words are trenched deep by irony, as in "To a Certain Author" and "On a Decision." Miss Johnson writes strictly, avoiding the superfluous. The more personal poems take suffering with stoicism. In "The Snow-Blind" the poet has a phrase, "the mind's blinding and momentary birth of sight" that epitomizes the mood out of which real poems are written.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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The Faculty Style

A FEW weeks ago an article by a college teacher of literature came to this office on a morning when we were sending to the printer an article on the same subject by a professional writer. The sharp contrast between them was everywhere in favor of the professional but was most marked in the writing itself. The professor's article was fifty percent longer than its content justified. It was ponderous, torpid, opaque, rambling, diluted. There were no incorrect case forms and no verbs at variance with their subjects, but fully half of the sentences were inept enough to rouse an English A instructor's passions. They strayed away from their original objectives, or they bogged down in vague and abstract polysyllables, or they frayed out in that maddening indefiniteness which permits the writer to believe that he has said something, perhaps something pretty acute, when he has actually said nothing at all. It was a villainous bit of writing. Our reviewers are never permitted to write that badly and, sending it back, we wanted to inclose with it a copy of the theme manual used at its author's university.

It started us thinking: as its author would say, it gave us furiously to think. Many English teachers write well or even brilliantly; we use some two dozen of that species as reviewers in this magazine. But for every one who writes well, and for every two who write acceptably, there must be from ten to fifty who write abominably. We turned to the latest issue of *PMLA*, the house-organ of the Modern Language Association, which chance had confided to the same mail. For years that quarterly has served us as a restorative whenever we have felt that our mental powers might be waning, but we had never before read it with an eye to style. So from now on we are going to attribute at least twenty percent of the anesthesia of *PMLA* to sheer bad writing. Look at it yourself: it is the most hopeless kind of prose, flabby but resistant, without grain or crystalline structure, amorphous, gelatinous, verbose, tautological, inert. If worse writing regularly gets published in the United States, the periodicals that contain it do not exchange with *The Saturday Review*.

Yet the people who write that gruel are the people who give college courses in writing. Whenever we visit a college, we find the English Department in a mood of soul-searching and dismay because the undergraduates aren't ambitious to write great novels or five-act dramas in blank verse. The profs are always asking one another why their students don't write better, why more novelists and poets don't sprout under the local elms, what can be done to create a "climate" favorable to the excitements and enthusiasms of literature, how alma mater can best fan such sparks of literary talent as from time to time blow in with the freshman class. Their concern is genuine—and it is pathetic. But it almost never gets intense and intelligent enough to do the most obvious and hopeful thing, which is to scrutinize the local courses in composition.

Here and there, in isolated instances, in this college or that one, the teaching of composition is strikingly better than it was a generation ago. But it remains pretty bad on the average. Bad? Dreadful, scandalous, sometimes unspeakable. If there are a dozen colleges in the United States which do not assume that anyone can teach composition and that the feeblest members of the department can be most usefully occupied in teaching it, if there are six colleges where the teacher of composition is not looked down on by his colleagues and kept permanently in the junior ranks, we have somehow missed them in our travels, which have been pretty extensive. The boys mourn because they don't seem to be producing a decent quota of the nation's novelists, but they continue to staff their courses in writing with the people who write the stuff that *PMLA* prints.

Not all this frustration is due to the contempt of predestinate genitive-counters, which is a thinly masked suspicion and envy. Some educators have held that training in writing must be regarded as "professional" and must therefore be confided to the graduate schools. That is theoretically profound but the slightest experience of writing, or of undergraduate illiteracy, destroys the theory. Other presidents, deans, and department chairmen sincerely believe that writing cannot be taught; and, if it can't be, there is no sense in spending money, care, or thought on the courses that perfunctorily try to teach it. But that idea is simple nonsense. Or academic nonsense.

No one can make a novelist or a poet out of a college student whom an all-wise providence has designed to be a professor of education; no composition teacher can add the twentieth part of a cubit to any literary talent. But any intelligent student can be taught to say clearly and decently what he wants to say, which is more than the average English professor, if *PMLA* represents him, has ever learned. And any student who has literary talent can be helped on his way—can be taught many things that will implement his talent, draw it out, mature it, and help it to work free of its earliest contradictions and impediments.

A period of apprenticeship is an excellent thing for any artist. If a writer can get it in college, so much the better. But you have to apprentice a writer to a writer. The particular skill he is trying to learn can be learned only from someone who has that skill. Only one kind of person can teach a college student how to be a writer: a person who is himself a writer. Writers have been there; they have learned how to do the job. Looking at a student's manuscript, they know in their nerves and by the patterns of professional experience what is wrong with it, what must be done to make it better, how the next job can best take off from where this one leaves off. They can communicate their knowledge because it consists of experience—and that is how writing can be taught. The occasional exception, a Copey or a Dean Briggs, is an inspired teacher—and there are no rules about inspiration.

The simple first step, then, in any program to improve the teaching of composition at a college, is to hire writers to do it. Every time a poet or a novelist is taken into an English faculty the situation improves by just that much, but there are still far too few of them. The next step is to realize and acknowledge that such teaching is just as valuable as any other in the department of English, that it is probably more difficult to do and certainly harder to get. This will require teachers of literature and scholarly method to abate their contempt, whether of their own impulse or with outside help. Literary talent, of itself alone, does not necessarily make a man inferior to scholars whose business is to lecture about it.

The literary climate so much desired will prove to be a function of literary people. It consists only of like-minded people, undergraduates and their elders, who are interested in literature from within rather than from without, and who like to get together and talk shop, discussing their common problems. The colleges will have more of it when they make room for people who are not only interested in the arts but actually practise them as well. If you want to produce writers at alma mater, you have got to have some writers there for the undergraduates to make friends with. Judging by the products that the trade journal prints, alma mater hasn't many of them on hand just now.

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Letters to the Editor: *Books in the Southwest; Dramatizing Evolution*

Passage to Flagstaff

SIR:—I note that P. E. G. Quercus visits the bookstores on the East Coast. Why doesn't he take the advice of a late great New York newspaperman?

Would you like to know what I saw? Drove from Los Angeles to Flagstaff, Arizona—a distance of 520 miles each way—last month. Registered at the Harvey House in Needles, California, but didn't sleep there. The Santa Fe brought in all its spare trains and sorted them out right under my window. The dining room has a small book counter, and prominently displayed was J. B. Priestley's "Midnight on the Desert" which the bookseller (a young man) said he hadn't read because he liked short stories.

Over on the south rim of the Grand Canyon (side trip from Flagstaff) in the glorified Harvey House there, El Tovar, found many recent books, again "Midnight on the Desert" and Mrs. Luhan's "Edge of Taos Desert." They also sell Eastman films, Hershey's chocolate, and Wrigley's gum at this counter. No disparagement meant.

Talked with Mr. Glassman in Flagstaff, owner of a book and gift shop of the better sort. He has one shelf containing books pertaining to that locality and the Southwest. Charles Russell's "Trails Plowed Under"; Boyer—"Arizona in Literature"; Mary Austin's "Earth Horizon"; also "And So—Victoria"; "Around the World in 11 Years"; "Furniture of the Olden Times," by Frances Clay Moore; "Bad Parent's Garden of Verse." Mr. Glassman said, in answer to my question, "Is Flagstaff a literary town?" "We have a Shakespeare Club."

This was my second trip to Flagstaff. Last year spent a few days there en route to Santa Fe and Taos. It was Mrs. Luhan's book, "Lorenzo in Taos," which made me feel I must see Taos. Enjoyed my second reading of "Death Comes for the Archbishop" after my trip to Taos. Also saw Kit Carson's grave; hard by it that of Father Martinez, the bad priest in Willa Cather's aforementioned book.

Enjoyed your calendar of books in a recent issue of *SRL*. I never miss the *SRL*. That sounds like a letter to one's favorite movie star. By the way, in fifteen years in California I have seen but few of them.

RUTH LUNDER.

Los Angeles, Calif.

"Flow of Horizons"

SIR:—Through one of those accidents which happen in every reviewing medium, your editorial board passed by in 1936 a rather remarkable book and left it without a review. The author is now dead; and as a member of that editorial board, I wish to call attention to what will be the only book of a talented writer. "Flow of Horizons," by D. Owen Stephens (The John Day Company, New York, 1936, $2.50) was an imaginative recreation of evolution from the earliest plasm up to man, by a scientist who knew how to write. It is good science; but it is also a visualized account of a developing world, a sensitized account of the dim growth of consciousness, that I read with delight, and that I believe many readers, if they knew of the book, would read with equal delight. The attempt to dramatize evolution through the long line from cell to vertebrate, is not novel; but Mr. Stephens's book is. He had poetry in his science, and a power to make primitive experience convincing which is rare. I regret his early death; but hope that so good a book as this will not die with him.

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY.

New York City.

"SHE NEVER BUYS ANYTHING BUT SETS."

Poets' Guild Not Passing Hat

SIR:—The Executive Committee of the Poets' Guild wishes to state that it has not authorized anyone to collect money for any of its purposes, or for any purposes connected with the memory and work of the late Anna Hempstead Branch.

THE POETS' GUILD.

New York City.

Peter Irving's Journal

SIR:—During the coming year it is hoped to publish the Journal of a tour through Europe made in 1807 by Peter Irving, brother of Washington Irving. Of this Journal three parts are known. The first describes the journey from Naples to Bologna, May 22-June 10, and is deposited at present in the New York Public Library. The second, at Yale, covers the crossing of the Alps and a trip through Switzerland, June 20-July 6. The third, marked "Highlands II," and without dates, is at the University of Texas.

It is suspected that other sections may still be in existence, but may be listed as manuscripts of Washington Irving, since all three sections now known have been so marked. A search of the usual sources of information having been fruitless, I am appealing to any of your readers who may have manuscripts purporting to be journals of Washington Irving to examine these carefully to determine whether they are parts of this 1807 journal of Peter Irving.

Any information in regard to such manuscripts will be gratefully received by the undersigned, at the New York Public Library, 476 Fifth Avenue, New York City, or by Professor Leonard Beach, Department of English, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

W. E. WRIGHT.

New York Public Library
New York City.

Back Numbers Offered

SIR:—Do you know of any library that would make use of back numbers of the magazine? I have a fairly complete set back to 1933, I believe.

I dislike parting with the magazine which I have found very useful, but the change in my work has made it necessary for me to store them, and it seems wasteful not to have them in use when someone might enjoy them.

I will appreciate any advice you can give me in regard to this.

JEANETTE K. CHASE.

Medford, Wis.

Libraries or other institutions wishing to avail themselves of our correspondent's offer should write directly to her at the address above.—Ed.

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Building for the Future

ARCHITECTURE AND MODERN LIFE. By Baker Brownell and Frank Lloyd Wright. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1937. $4.

Reviewed by TALBOT HAMLIN

IT has long been a truism that architecture and social life are inextricably interrelated, that the forms of one express the forms and ideals of the other. This book is a vivid attempt to give new significance to this ancient platitude, by adding to the eloquent praises of organic life and organic architecture which we expect from Frank Lloyd Wright such a trenchant analysis of modern industrial and urban trends as comes ideally from one who heads the Department of Contemporary Thought at Northwestern University.

In the minds of both authors is a passionately held concept that human life and the land are or should be a unity, that the only possible life of dignity and integrity is one founded on the land and primarily connected with it. Not that everyone must be a farmer, as in the Utopia Morris painted so winningly in "News from Nowhere," for machines—especially electric power and the automobile—are precisely what make this new life possible. But for its complete realization not only the physical integration of land and organic architecture is needed but also a complete reformation of popular wants and dreams, a turning away from the "false," postponed, vicarious values of city life to a new significance based on integrity of production-and-consumption, of work-and-enjoyment, and on continuity of land tenure and family life.

Of the breakdown of contemporary idealisms, Brownell gives a vivid picture—the ravishing of the land; the destruction of balance between rural areas and cities, between industry and agriculture, between production and consumption; the growing concentration of wealth and power; the loss of individual security; the destruction of personality by standardized and vicarious pleasures. Especially he sees a destruction of education, of religion, and of the integrity of human life. Similarly, Wright pictures in vivid paragraphs the flow of architectural development in the past, its close relation to the life that produced it, and its disintegration into inorganic eclecticism under the impact of inorganic nineteenth century industrialism and power politics.

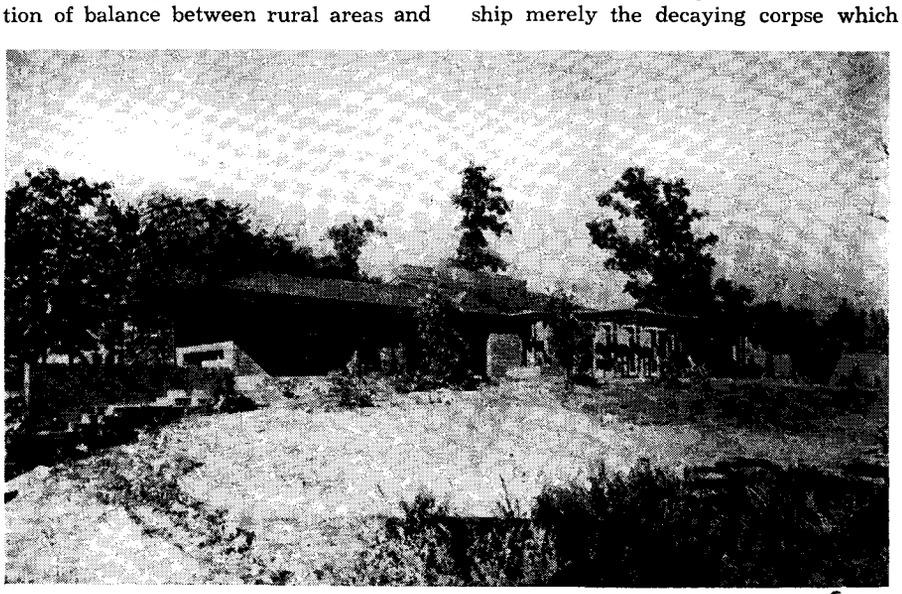
But the book is richer than any outline of its content. Both authors are men of knowledge, imagination, force, and, on occasion, wit. Both are mystics at heart, and both have felt and been formed by many elements of Eastern thought—especially the philosophy of Lao Tze.

One may quibble at some of their conclusions. One may question some of the broad attacks on cities and city life. After all, man is a gregarious animal; many cultures seem to prefer crowding to comfort, even without economic pressure. And some gathering together of men in cities seems in the past to have always accompanied, if it did not cause, the development of great art and great thought. One can much more seriously question the choice of the Southeastern part of the country as the area held up for admiration because of its continuing ruralism. After all, there was "Tobacco Road." . . . And, after all, there are those of us who remember rural communities—even prosperous ones—whose chief cultural creations were mental stagnation and back-biting intolerance. . . .

And there is education, the chief whipping boy of both authors. Bad enough it is, of course, with mass-production ideals clouding and dimming it. Yet is scholarship merely the decaying corpse which they picture? In this book Wright has chosen a college professor as his co-author; and I doubt if Wright ever finds more appreciative audiences than in the very schools and colleges he so loves to attack.

Despite these questions the book remains a remarkable achievement, enlightening both as to architecture and as to social life. It is one of the best expressions I know of the organic one-ness of architecture and humanity. It shows how architecture not only expresses but also directs and creates life. It realizes the values of beauty and nobility in design, as ideals which are equally as organic as is the ideal of functionalism. It reveals architecture as in a very real sense the spiritual design alike of society and of individual human living.

Talbot Hamlin is librarian of the Avery Architectural Library of Columbia University.



THE WILLEM HOUSE, MINNEAPOLIS (*Frank Lloyd Wright, architect*).

Moonshine and Honeysuckle

A SOUTHERN HARVEST. Edited by Robert Penn Warren. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by EUGENE ARMFIELD

THE twenty-two stories in this volume are brought together from other books and from magazines because all the writers are Southerners, and most of them live and work in the South. Save for a section from Thomas Wolfe's "Of Time and the River," the stories are laid in the South and have Southerners as their characters. Like most compilations of pieces by diverse authors, the stories are of unequal value. Six or eight are very good, especially those by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, John Peale Bishop, Edward Anderson, Elma Godchaux, and Erskine Caldwell, whose "Kneel to the Rising Sun" has been reprinted and commented upon so many times that it seems likely to become a sort of violent classic. A few of the stories are sloppily constructed and badly written. The majority fall between these two extremes. Readers will, of course, disagree about which classification any given story belongs to.

It is from the second point of view that the book is disquieting. For if this book be representative, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the South is peopled only by ghosts and scarecrows. With a few exceptions, the writers have two major preoccupations: the, usually rapturous, contemplation of decayed respectibility; and the exploration of the quaint doings and sayings of little-known localities. There is nothing here about the men and women who own factories, work in the cotton mills, manage the A. & P., or teach school; nothing of the life of Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis,

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or Greensboro; no sight behind the exteriors of the poignantly dismal little towns Thomas Wolfe saw from the train, at the beginning of "Of Time and the River," nor of the middle class Mr. Wolfe turned to such rich account in "Look Homeward, Angel." Instead there is a dreary succession of "plantations" which give way only to sordid hovels.

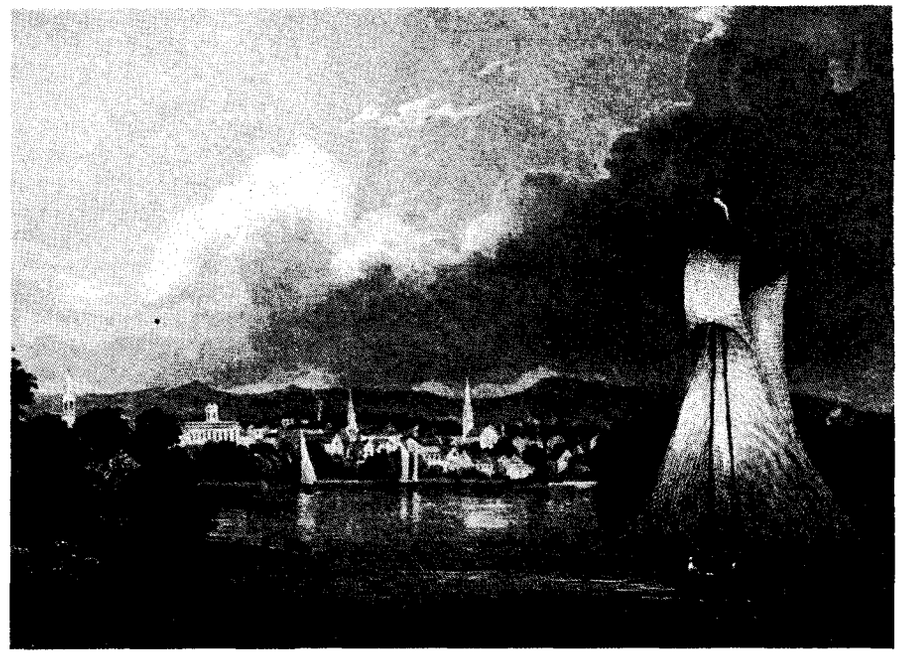
A number of the contributors are almost exclusively interested in the past, in what they imagine to be a great tradition. That is their right, of course, but their work is most amazingly sterile. An awareness of tradition can produce, of course, first-rate literature. The two successful examples given us of this vein of Southern writing make clear the pointlessness of the rest. In "Record at Oak Hill," by Elizabeth Maddox Roberts, the past becomes a dynamic factor in the continuation of life and society. Miss Roberts weaves an intricate tale which gives life and meaning to a conflict which, reaching far back into the past, finds its resolution in the present, and makes clear how a man whose ancestors fought carpet-baggers might easily, faced with the harshness of modern life, become a follower of Huey Long. For the two ladies in John Peale Bishop's "If Only," tradition becomes a living, if bothersome, incubus. Both of these writers are in these stories, at least, what Mr. Warren in his introduction claims for a whole group—historically minded. For the other members of this group the contemplation of the past seems to boil down to what is perhaps the most tiresome of Southern manias: the endless chatter about family.

The pursuit of picturesque people and customs is the concern of another good-sized group of these Southern writers. Quaintness is perhaps the most dangerous obstacle regional writers have to overcome. Those in the South who have been most successful in finding universal human qualities behind the bandanas and the dialect seem to be a group of Louisiana writers. In talented hands the investigation of local customs produces good writing, as in Lyle Saxon's recent novel, "Children of Strangers," and two excellent stories in this volume, by Elma Godchaux and E. P. O'Donnell.

Several of the contributors—Mr. Wolfe, Mr. Caldwell, Katherine Anne Porter, William Faulkner—have interests that lie entirely outside the main preoccupations of this book. Their work was probably included in an attempt to make the book as representative as possible.

Mr. Warren reminds us in his preface that writers can only deal with the life they know best. If the stories in "A Southern Harvest" represent what most of these writers know best, their world must be indeed superficial. They have missed the best of the South's past, as well as its living present.

Eugene Armfield is on the editorial staff of The Publishers' Weekly, *and author of "Where the Weak Grow Strong."*



HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT IN 1841: *From a drawing by T. Cole, courtesy of Frederick S. Bliss.*

The Nutmeg State

GUIDE TO THE HISTORY AND THE HISTORIC SITES OF CONNECTICUT. By Florence S. Marcy Crofut. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1937. $10.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THIS definitive reference book for the local history of Connecticut begins with a series of brief chapters on maps, on accounts of old trails and highways, on political history, on journeys of Washington in Connecticut, on marches of the French armies of the Revolution, on Western lands owned by Connecticut—and then gets down to its encyclopedic business. This is to give of each Connecticut town (township if you are not a New Englander) a condensed account (with bibliography) of early settlement, incorporation, notable people born there, or who lived there, religious history, old roads, educational history, battlefields and memorials, participation in wars, and miscellaneous information of importance. Since the subject is Connecticut, the phrase "if any" need seldom be used!

Miss Crofut has compiled two volumes indispensable for librarians and historians, and by no means only of Connecticut for the broadcast of the Connecticut seed has been extraordinary. Her work, so far as I have been able to test it, is accurate to a high degree. She washes away the West Cornwall covered bridge in the flood of 1936, which is a mistake, but a happy one, since it will soon be pulled down for reasons much less inevitable than the efforts of nature. She dodges, being a New Englander, the nice question of how the town of Kenilworth was mispronounced and misspelled into Killingworth. She swallows some whoppers about the pine trees of Cornwall, and misses a Quaker relation of a theological encounter at Clinton with Pierson, the first president of Yale, of interest and significance. But the triviality of these exceptions, taken from the towns I know best, merely illustrates the reliability of her survey. With the sources she gives, anyone should be able to find out from this book the essential facts about every community in Connecticut.

Only one caveat must be entered. She does not possess the style of Governor Cross, the literary quality of whose Thanksgiving proclamations (to cite an instance) makes the lover of good English rejoice. Her style is of an aridity and choppiness seldom to be encountered, even in the last edition of the "Encyclopedia Britannica." Nor is aridity all. What can be said of this sentence describing the British capture of New Haven: "Finding that their forces had been depleted and alarmed by the gathering militia, the north and west sections of the town were held by a part of the first division of the enemy"! Fortunately for the publishers, no one is going to buy this book for its style; and those who love, or need to know, Connecticut, can be assured that they will find in these two volumes quite the most scholarly and complete summary of the social and political and biographical history of the state, town by town, and sometimes almost house by house.

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A Reviewer Grows Up

BY ISABEL R. A. CURRIER

NOW and then authors complain against the unfairness of very young book reviewers. The more experienced among them declare that they never expect careful, considered reviews from a young reviewer. Time was when I resented these statements hotly but nowadays, when such complaints reach me, I mutter:

"For the injustices which my young reviewing perpetrated against authors, O Lord, be lenient with me."

My litany for lenience must admit responsibility for all of the cardinal sins which authors list against reviewers. I must smite the breast of guilt at the recital of carelessness, of confusion, of getting out of a review by giving a synopsis of the story, of writing independent essays on the author's subject without regard for what the author had done with the subject, of letting my reviewing ego attempt to batter down the established writer and to prop up the beginner. But through it all I had a conscience.

The conscience manifested itself principally in an insistence that I read thoroughly and painstakingly the book which I was to review. That engendered travail, for I was not interested in all books, and I am a slow reader. My sense of responsibility at the beginning of my reviewing (I was twenty-two, and not long out of school) was based upon the conviction that it was the earnest mission of all intelligent and gifted youth, of which I was certain I was one, to inform benighted readers how thoroughly they were being taken in by one set of writers, and to guide their grateful minds to a superior and unshackled set of writers. I gave the readers of my newspaper's book section the benefit of my tolerant wisdom.

This author, I told them, had written an amusing story if there were people who had time to read only for amusement. It was unfortunate, I pointed out, that another well-known author couldn't write the English language. (In that particular review, I demonstrated my own mastery of English by speaking of the author's "most unique" conception of plot.) Carl Sandburg, my readers learned, "dragged lyrical words through downtown drain pipes." T. S. Eliot "should, at least, erect quotation marks to the ghosts of Shakespeare and Andrew Marvell." I sought things to disparage. I never sought anything to praise. This was partly because I thought disparagement more important than praise. It was also due to the admiration I drew from young co-workers, as silly as I. I got away with it, I presume, because ill-mannered criticism always seems more fearless than ill-mannered at first glance.

My outbursts of debauchery as a reviewer lasted for two or three years. They continued until I began to suspect, in sober moments, that the world was not my oyster. Piles of rejection slips intimated that my private efforts as an author didn't cause editors to gasp with the right kind of awe. I learned, to my amazement, that writing is an art which is approached through labor of the most dogged kind. In tossing my own hard-wrung and worthless efforts into the waste-basket, I learned the first lesson of sincere criticism. It is too bad that I learned it after I had been criticizing without it for years.

The scrapbook of my book reviews, which I keep for the good of my soul, marks the change in definite tones. That prolific reviewer who was myself had acquired an almost reverent sense of responsibility in attempting to evaluate a work which, no matter who had produced it or how well it had been produced, represented weeks and months and years of struggle with words on the part of its creator.

There were lapses, of course. The thwarted ego which gnaws the foundations of judgment in many book reviewers manifested itself by a deep reverence for the hard work of little-known writers, and a deep scorn for the hard work of established writers. I had a spell of "discovering" new authors, whom I regarded as my personal property and when, as sometimes happened, the authors wrote me in gratitude, I became almost maudlin in my admiration for them. I received letters of outrage, too—never from authors, but from admirers of their work who didn't admire what I had to say about it. I cherished a particular grudge against those writers who had, in a manner of speaking, formed a cult. Those credited with "sounding new notes in English literature" sounded them sourly in my envious ears.

To a degree it was defense of changing taste which conditioned my struggle to review books according to my lights. As a struggling bantam, I had thrown my loud allegiance with the "revolutionists" in literature. Our platform of praise was based upon the sophistry that art is cheapened when it becomes comprehensible to the many. Then, my maturing taste in literature began to swing heavily to the right. I became a disciple of form, and I no longer pretended to be one of the initiated who found hidden messages. I had two opposite tastes to defend until I found my own balance, and the balance, as a reviewer, was dependent upon finding my own stride as a writer. Reviewers of books invariably like to write, and people who like to write cannot resist, when they are immature, coloring their appraisal of another's work with personal ambitions.

Somewhere in my course I stopped identifying my private hope of achievement with the achievement of every writer whose work I saw. I don't know how the balance came, but my clippings began to show more of sincerity than of self-consciousness, more of thoughtfulness than of emotion. I had found that, even though art is long, life isn't, and one lives longer if divorced from inner chaos. For the first time since I had subjected myself to what I thought was intellectuality, I began to read for pleasure as well as for analysis, and I stopped reading for spite forever.

In this sweeping apology to the authors whom I have mistreated and the readers of reviews whom I have disregarded during the years in which a small public suffered from my ego, I may point out one great advantage which they have gained by permitting me to live. The advantage is in the fact that I devote all of my time to my own writing now, mistreating no one save, perhaps, myself. With all humility and awareness of the perpendicular path up the noble mountain of literature I feel, at last, that I am equipped to write book reviews. But I seldom write them now.

For ten years Isabel Currier wrote reviews for a New England paper. She has more recently contributed articles and stories to various leading magazines.

Transcience

By ANNE HAMILTON

THE throbbing vein
in her wrist is still. . . .

Where the counterpane
made a carven hill,
her thin sweet flesh,
discreetly boned,
lies only a mesh
as loosely coned
as heaped-up stack
of needles and knitting. . . .

But look! through the slack
in the tissues fitting
a light leaps surely,
not evanescent,
but sharply, purely
incandescent!
Out through the shutter,
skimming the grasses,
fire-fly flutter
translucently passes!
Love, one last touch!
But no light lingers
for the satiate clutch
of intimate fingers.
Gone like a spark
through the dark pine's ravelling,
passing the lark
in more certain travelling;
on the peacock sky
a retreating blur,
but *here* all I
required of her. . . .

Cold, her brain;
betrayed, her will;
and the high blue vein
in her wrist is still!

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

The Chevvy That Hung Her Head

CHEVVY hung her head: she was ashamed.

Every line of her smart little body showed it. She might still have been—after nearly five years and 30,000 miles—the handsomest open phaeton on the road. But all the admiration and care seemed to go to the big Family Ford. No one but the Old Man ever drove Chevvy, and even he only for errands and to the train. Where were the grand picnics of her youth when the whole gang would pile in for swimming at Lloyds Neck or trips across the Sound? She had been as far as Quebec once; and through the Catskills all the way to Ithaca and the Finger Lakes. And now look at her. Her sandy complexion had faded almost white in years of weather. Her floor mats were gone. Her accelerator pedal was off. From her front bumper (rusty) and her winged radiator-cap (askew) to her clanking luggage-rack (loose) she looked lonely and abused. Her canvas top sagged damply with the afternoon's fall of snow; there wasn't enough anti-freezing stuff in her radiator; and from cylinder head to oil-pan drain plug she was bitterly and savagely cold.

Cars are like women: you mustn't give them too much time for brooding. I'm afraid poor Chevvy, in long days under the lamp-post at Roslyn station or in the parking lot at Manhasset, had abundant leisure to meditate. The little glass dials on her dashboard would mist over as she enumerated her woes. Her spark plugs were foul, her horn was faint, her valve-tappets rattled, her windshield wiper was short of breath. She felt a fatal weakness in her battery, her tires had soft corns, and there was a nasty one-sided tightness in her brakes accompanied by hot shooting pains in the drums. Growing a little morbid as she pondered these symptoms, she would think wistfully of the commandments in Holy Writ, viz. the Instruction Booklet which was still in her pocket and which her Old Man had never properly heeded. She felt quite sure, for instance, that the S.A.E. viscosity of her oil was all wrong for this winter weather. S.A.E., I suppose, means Society of Automotive Engineers? but as far as the Old Man was concerned it might have meant Saint Agnes Eve: he would have been pleased if it had. The gap between her spark plugs was undoubtedly wider than .032" prescribed in her breviary; her carburetor was full of sediment; she had rheumatism in most of her gaskets and her front wheels didn't toe in properly. The diaphragm of her fuel pump was leaking, her gears had toothache, and certainly there was something eccentric about her cam-shaft. As for more intricate and secret delicacies, the intimate cones and sleeves and bearings of her syncro-mesh transmission or her differential joint, she didn't dare think about them.

So she hung her head, and other cars sneered. Big shiny Fords, Buicks, Dodges, Packards, warmed with heaters, suave with fashionable streamline figures, rich with rugs and upholstery and wreaths of holly and ribbon hanging in their rear windows, purring smooth with costly Ethyl, filled the parking lot and smiled condescendingly at her naked leather cushions, her flaccid tires. As they swung round her in dignified arcs they looked patronizingly at her humble and sparse little instrument board with so few gadgets. Chevvy was glad they couldn't see—unless the key was turned on—how low the gas usually was; and of the cheapest kind. (No wonder she had that hacking cough in one cylinder.) No clock, no lighter, no stove, no radio—and even the poor little Free Wheeling button had never been used. Having once learned to shift gears the Old Man wasn't going to fangle with anything new.

But these merely physical contrasts, to which our unassuming heroine was accustomed, were not the most painful. Give her a good pull on the choke, with any sort of sparkle in her poor little frost-bitten battery, and she'd leap to life prompter and louder than any other. What really *was* hard to bear was the times when (for whatever reason) the Old Man was late coming home. Dusk would fall over the parking lot, and other people's Old Men came pouring out from the train, and one by one the cars would back and turn and crunch off over the gravel, home for dinner and the warm garage. Train after train rumbles through the Manhasset cutting, and you can see all the parked cars peering through their big lenses, wondering if he's on that one, or will it be the next? And the cars that have to wait the longest always get a razz from those whose owners are punctual. Nothing is so domestic, so censorious of broken routine, as a middle-class family sedan. In the very way they spurn the pebbles behind them as they turn out of the parking lot and rumble for home you can divine their contempt for the other cars that are still tarrying. Once the fine deep-cut tire-tread of a departing limousine picked up a pebble and flung it derisively right against Chevvy's windshield.

She had grown sensitive about this matter. Though she was secretly proud of the Old Man, and pleased that his work was different from most so that he kept irregular hours, yet there were times when she believed he was later than necessary. It was painful to get an ironical honk from some purseproud Packard or pharisaical Ford as they coughed away. More painful still was the disdainful silence of other cars leaving discreetly as the late trains came in. Not even station wagons, the most self-righteous of vehicles, would be likely to make talk about a car that doesn't pull out by midnight—when the theatre train arrives—but if you hang around the lot very much later than that, you get chaffed about it. And there were occasions when Chevvy was a bit peeved about George and Eddie: for these, or may be Frank and Bucky, I'm not sure

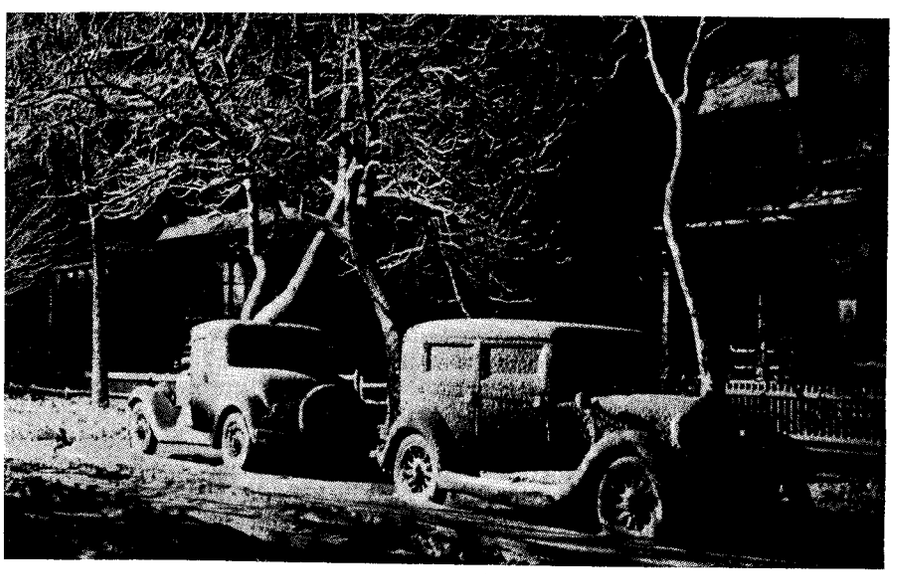

PHOTO BY FRED G. KORTH: *From "U. S. Camera, 1936" (Morrow).*

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of the names, were most often mentioned by the Old Man as the cronies whose affectionate insistence had so lingeringly detained him. It appears that there was a ski-ball resort where these gentlemen would relax from a difficult evening's work; and as far as Chevvy could learn there is something about ski-ball that makes it impossible to keep track of time. . . . Anyhow, what happened on Christmas Eve may have been due to Chevvy's own delicate state of health; or to the surfeit of ignitions too long repressed; or just plain miracle.

It could only have happened just where it did: because Chevvy lived half-way between two different railroad lines, and her Old Man commuted indiscriminately (if that's the word), or promiscuously, sometimes on one line and sometimes on the other. He could take the steam train at Roslyn, which was slower and more expensive, but nearer and more to his antiquarian taste. Or he could take the electric train at Manhasset, faster and cheaper but used by less picturesque people. And once in a while, after a busy day in town, or a game of ski-ball, and his mind full of his own ideas, in which he was very happily interested, he would quite simply and actually forget which line he had used that day. This was difficult, because at one place or the other—four miles apart—Chevvy was waiting for him.

So it was Christmas Eve; and our story, already too long delayed by explanation, has all the requisite setting. It was cold, and a damp snow had come on during the day, and Chevvy was very unhappy. She hung her head, and the others sneered. The 5:41 (the train that has the club cars) had come; and the 6:21 (which you can recognize by the fact that it always gets in at 6:25); and the 6:56; but no Old Man. And everyone else was home, getting ready to dress the Tree; and Chevvy was fed up with seeing other cars roll by (their snow-chains clacking merrily and censoriously) while she stood solitary and sore. The specific gravity of her battery was dangerously low (she could actually feel the amperes fading) and her radiator was getting ready to freeze. It's Christmas Eve, she said to herself, and he's got no business to play ski-ball tonight. Or highball either. If he thinks he's going to be late he's very much mistaken. I'm going in town and hunt for him. I've heard enough about the places they're so fond of, I bet I can find them.

To this day no one knows just how she did it; sheer will-power I suppose; but with a fearful effort of electrolysis, gasoline vapor, and grinding flywheel, which convulsed the battery down its last numb ampere, she cranked herself, moaned with lumbago and excitement, and came alive.

What she proposed to do was even tougher than you might think. Chevvy has a horror of driving in New York. Moreover it was snowing; she hadn't any chains; she didn't dare turn her lights above dim because something's gone queer in her wiring so the fuse blows if you give the lamps full juice. She felt sure that if and when she got to town she'd make some mistake—it runs in the family—and get picked up by a cop. If she braked too suddenly at a traffic light she'd surely skid, yet if she didn't make pretty good time she'd never get the Old Man home within the hours of decency. But she loved him, and dared everything. A warming current of heroism ran through her engine; the ice crystals melted in the radiator; she pulled away from the familiar lamp-post where he had left her that morning, and set off. The new Parkway was since her time; no, she thought, I'll stick to the familiar Northern Boulevard. Then I can't go wrong.

Through the forested curves of the Roslyn Estates she throbbed cautiously; sliding a bit on those worn old tires, and wishing she had some glycerine for the windshield. Snow was drifted deep on her unsheltered cushions, but her heart was stout. At the traffic light on Northern Boulevard she had to wait. She gathered all her forces now for the long run. She remembered the old dashboard formula and took heart: "I've got water, I've got amperes, I've got oil, I've got gas, I've got miles." That was what the Old Man used to sing to himself, checking up the dials. But wait a minute—*have* I got gas? Not enough for a ride to town. Damn the parsimonious old fool, why does he never buy more than 5 at a time. If I stop at a filling station they'll be sure to think something's wrong.

There was no way out of it, she must appeal for help. How could she persuade someone to chaperone her as far as a gas pump? Through the whirling snow and in the pale beam of her lights she saw a form approaching. Panting a little with eagerness she rolled towards him, misjudged, braked hard, slid sideways, and stalled.

It was the Old Man himself, who had not been playing ski-ball, but (after calling on a publisher) had forgotten whether he had parked at Roslyn or at Manhasset; and guessed wrong. So he had been walking home two miles in the snow, and enjoying it.

I guess I'm going gently and serenely nuts, he remarked afterward to Frank and Bucky (or Bill and Max, I'm not sure of the names). I couldn't remember where I'd parked the Chevvy, but I seem to have left her just where you come out from the Estates onto Northern Boulevard. What do you suppose was the idea in that?

He brushed out the snow, and climbed in, and drove home—hardly even noticing how high she held her head, how loving and quick her combustion. They weren't more than a few minutes late for dinner; as a matter of fact they weren't really late at all because the children were busy telephoning. Chevvy felt a glow of satisfaction that quite bucked up some of the anaemic amperes; and even the Old Man, having taken some anti-freeze himself, had the good sense to give her a strong slug of alcohol in her radiator —which, for man or motor, is good Christmas medicine.

Pragmatic Democrat

GREAT LEVELER, THE LIFE OF THADDEUS STEVENS. By Thomas Frederick Woodley. New York: Stackpole Sons. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by PAUL H. BUCK

THIS is not a new biography but a partially revised and slightly condensed edition of Mr. Woodley's "Thaddeus Stevens," published in 1934. Mr. Woodley's work makes no positive contribution as history because it does not change in any vital respect the factual structure of Stevens's life established by earlier writers. It is not distinguished as biography because it does not possess sufficient artistry to achieve completely successful character delineation. But it is a full record of Stevens's career written from a point of view sympathetic to Stevens. As such it comes as a challenge to the prevailing practice of relegating Stevens to the lowest hell of American historical characters.

The chief value of the book is its plea for justice. Mr. Woodley is quite correct in pointing out that Stevens is thought of as a sinister figure in American history and that historians have become progressively harsher in their condemnation. This seems to Mr. Woodley prejudice, and he presents in contrast a Stevens who was a great "pragmatic democrat," who had the true corrective for inequality in American life and the proper solution for the problems of reconstruction. He marshals as evidence Stevens's passion to make God's law of equality prevail on earth, his anti-Masonic leadership, his battle for free public education, his persisent struggle against slavery, his realistic view of the Constitution, and his program of reconstruction. In respect to the last point, Mr. Woodley believes that Stevens's plan would have succeeded provided Congress had done all that Stevens wanted, including confiscation of rebel property, and had Stevens lived beyond the year 1868.

All that is necessary to explode this argument is to contrast the methods and achievements of Stevens with those of Lincoln. In time of great crisis the former espoused force and vengeance as means to his end; the latter charity and moderation. Every important action of Stevens's life resulted in increased animosity, greater chaos, and delayed solutions. The American people made no mistake in choosing Lincoln and rejecting Stevens as the exemplar of American democracy.

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Fiction Fights the Civil War

(*Continued from page 4*)

war. This sort of thing is new to historical fiction and can be found in no Civil War novel before our time. Obviously this kind of war novel has learned much from novels of the world war. Yet there is an obdurate survival of certain old conventions even in this radical new kind of fiction. The farm boy who becomes a soldier in the Army of the Ohio has two love affairs. The first is as realistically presented as the one in "Long Remember." But the second is the familiar Hearts Divided theme and is treated as sentimentally as anything in its predecessors of sixty years ago.

From the jacket of "Boy in Blue."

With the shift of emphasis to the experience of noncombatants and the emotions of private soldiers, the Civil War novel has been democratized. The earlier novel dealt with the well-born, with planters and officers. In it there were few slaves and they were family friends; there were no poor whites at all, and there were yeoman farmers only as there are merry villagers in a musical comedy of the prince in disguise.

This democratization has been thoroughgoing not only in the fiction written from the Northern side, but also in the novels of the Confederacy, which I prefer to examine as a group. The generals, to be sure, are still present. Whereas in a Yankee novel we may catch a glimpse of Buford drinking coffee on the first morning of Gettysburg or Thomas looking at Chattanooga through field glasses as a battalion passes his field headquarters, in any Confederate novel we are sure to get full length portraits of half a dozen. This is due not only to drama of the high command, which carries with it the destiny of armies, but also to the very interesting fact that these new Confederate novels can support the Lost Cause myth only by making it over. That urgent and tragic phantasy can survive only if fiction can explain how the cause was lost, and so fiction must reopen the old quarrels and settle them in dream otherwise than they were settled in history. Such interesting results follow as Miss Caroline Gordon's elevation of Bedford Forrest to sit at Stonewall Jackson's right hand, and the healing phantasy of what might have happened if Forrest had been given his way. Jefferson Davis, who was something of a Christ in the earlier novels, has also been abused and degraded in this contemporary effort to make his cause victorious. Nevertheless, despite the generals and the planters, the new Confederate novel takes in the whole Southern nation, as the old one did not, and is grounded on the people of the Confederacy, as the old one never was.

Another striking change is in the battle scenes. These novels contain none of the glorification of battle itself that we noted in Mary Johnston and her predecessors—as though war became magnificent from the fact that Southerners engaged in it. Furthermore, there is no panorama of battle; invariably the innovation of Stephen Crane triumphs and what we have is the individual character's participation, the private soldier's private view. But the most significant change is the fact that we get very little battle. What we get is the life behind the battle. We see the wounded more than the combatants, the base hospital more than the field headquarters — less army life, more anxiety and suffering at home. We see the impact of campaigns on the civilian nation — the hysterical joy following victory, the less hysterical despair following defeat, the slow attrition on the nerves of news and lack of news from the armies, the adjustment of the economy to the needs of the military machine and the effects it had on the people who have to make them. Much of this is, again, Civil War fiction learning from the fiction of the world war. But the wider fact is that this is war fiction written by a war generation. We have lived through a war, and it is our bitter knowledge projected backward that has produced these novels. The Civil War novel comes to maturity now, because only now have we had novelists capable of bringing experience to bear on it and competent to use the resources of the highly developed art form of the modern novel.

We are now in a position to say that the Civil War novel of our time has become a sociological novel, and not only that but a social, a critical, a philosophical novel as well. This generation of novelists has not only the war; it has also a perspective on history sharpened and vitalized by this generation's desire to appraise the significance of our past in relation to our present. The sense of history is working in these novels as it has worked only very infrequently before them. These novelists are trying to determine what the war *meant*. What it meant not only to individuals but to the nation. What its meaning was in terms of American life, American culture, American national experience.

The novelists of the neo-Confederate group have a systematic theory of American life and American history, and especially of the South. Essentially it is the theory which the intellectuals of the South have been developing for twenty years, especially the group of historians, sociologists, and literary critics centered at Vanderbilt University. It is based on the assumption that the agrarian civilization of the South was the best bulwark for the nation as a whole against the evils of developing industrialism. It holds that when Northern industrialism destroyed the Southern agrarian organization by force, the nation took the tragic irretrievable turning that has led to the chaos, the social injustice and anarchy, and the ominous breakdown of today. Here in the South was a stable order, a unified and self-equilibrating way of life, with the greatest measure of social health and social justice that the nation has ever seen. When it was overthrown, the way lay open to all the social vices and evils of the commercial and industrial orders. With the defeat of the Confederacy the promise of American civilization ended.

This theory of history has its defects. It ignores the failure of the agricultural organization to stave off bankruptcy from forced labor and depleted soil. It has to ignore slavery altogether or carry it by major force with an assertion that chattel slavery was at least a kindlier and more humane way of life than the wage slavery of the North. There are no runaway slaves in all these novels, for obviously there was nothing a slave would flee from. There is only one flogging and that by a bad overseer. Mr. Stark Young intimates that what little flogging slavery knew was the work of Yankee overseers, who were invariably discharged by their shocked employers. The theory has to leave the poor whites out of account altogether, and it has to exercise a curious sleight of hand on the yeomanry. There is no hint of their decision that this was a rich man's war but a poor man's fight. Most flagrantly of all, it has to ignore the proved decline of plantation economy which is so plain to economists now and was plain to more than a few Southerners before the war.

Perhaps the most ironical comment of all is one unconsciously made by the literature itself. Mr. Andrew Lytle's "The Long Night" completely accepts these basic dogmas. And his book shows this perfect society polarized to avenge an act of social violence by a series of murders continuing over years till one inheritor of the aristocratic life has killed fifteen men by stealth. The highest reach of the great society, the highest sanction of the social ideal, come down to a blood vendetta as simple, direct, and naively medieval as some *crime passionel* in the underworld of Naples. Yet we are to understand that America's destiny became tragic when this society fell.

But, as this fiction makes clear, a philosophy of history does not have to be true in order to produce good novels. These are our best Civil War novels precisely because they express this vig-

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orous philosophy. Because of it they are able to give Southern life a reality it had never had before in our literature. Their final judgments may be dubious but they give us the Southern nation with its energies, its emotions, its beliefs, its myths, its inter-relationships, its thinking, and its behavior. They achieve literary maturity—in idea, in form, in technique.

The novel that most explicitly declares the judgments I have described is Caroline Gordon's "None Shall Look Back." Miss Gordon is a convinced agrarian and a rigorous thinker and she is passionately dedicated to the idea of national tragedy. As a novelist, however, she is a little naive and awkward, unable to give all her ideas and emotions flesh. Mr. Lytle is a finer novelist, and his book, "The Long Night," alone of the group, taps the lusty folk literature which, twenty years before the Civil War, created the most promising school of Southern writers and which flowered in Mark Twain and Joel Chandler Harris. Mr. Stark Young's "So Red the Rose" belongs with the moonlight and honeysuckle literature of the eighties. It was the first best seller of the group, and it gave notice that the Civil War was alive again, but it is innocent of ideas and philosophy and merely repeats all the romantic clichés of its predecessors. What it has to tell us is merely that the best-born Southerners were on terms of equality and intimacy with some of the haughtiest nobles of France. "Gone with the Wind" is important as a phenomenon but hardly as a novel. It too has little thought and no philosophical overtone. It documents very well the daily life of a society at war and under reconstruction, but its ideas are rudimentary, its author has no eye and no feeling for human character, and its page by page reliance on all the formulas of sentimental romance and all the effects of melodrama is offensive. The size of its public is significant; the book is not.

Mr. Clifford Dowdey's "Bugles Blow No More," whose distinction has been obscured by the success of the others, accepts most of the premises and many of the conclusions I have described, but it keeps them implicit, using them only as the poles by which the novel is oriented. All of the others give us the war by means of a particular family or plantation, but this one uses a city. It carries Richmond, the Confederate capital, through the war years and in doing so manages to give us the rise and the fall not of a nation only but of a society as well.

That is the first merit of the novel: that whereas Miss Gordon gives us the South primarily as an idea and Mr. Young as a genealogy, Mr. Dowdey gives it to us as a society. He does not strain and there is no mechanical formula like the one that "Grand Hotel" gave to fiction and the movies, but we manage to see the war dominating a great variety of experience; we see it make a nation and we see that nation slowly collapse. We see the attrition of war on individual life and the life of a society. We see character hardened by the fire and we also see it crumble. We see personal relationships twisted, transformed, wrenched apart. We see the acid of war at work, with the armies themselves offstage, only the agony and suspense and despair as the sound of artillery comes on the wind and the carts bring the wounded in. It is a memorable novel. This is the way a people are in war. Nowhere else have I seen so poignantly the agonizing paralysis of waiting for news, the terrible impotence of those behind the lines. Nowhere else have I seen the disruptive powers of war so truly rendered.

I have left for the last the work of James Boyd, whose "Marching On" is from any point of view one of the best Civil War novels, and from some points of view the best. We have the Confederate army in it better than we get it anywhere else—always limited to James Fraser, the yeoman farmer who is its hero, and his squad, or at most his company. The war narrows to a few men splendidly realized for us. The army talk, the comradeship of the men, the fatigue and fear are done from the life. So is as much of the war as we see, a foraging raid, the endless marching, a skirmish or two, one battle. Then the northern prison, with James's two-year struggle to maintain his sanity, and the trip home to a Confederacy that is far along in disintegration. In his return all the effects for which the novels strive that I described before are achieved compactly, vividly, finally. The dying nation, the destruction, the waste and terror, the obliteration of morale and hope are all here in forty or fifty pages quite as effectively as in any three hundred elsewhere. This, then, is a Civil War novel achieving its principal effects in such a way that the larger pattern exists in terms of the immediate story. And note the last scene. James, but recently returned from two terrible years in a Yankee prison, is at the burned Prevost plantation when he sees some furtive, panic-stricken men skulking in the brush. They think he has captured them and he recognizes them as Yankee prisoners who have been set free from a Southern prison in advance of Sherman's coming and are trying to find the army. He is racked with pity and the memory of his own pain, gives them what bread he has, watches them wolf it whining, and the novel ends with this unstressed but profound pronouncement. The end has everything that we ask of tragedy.

I think we may make two judgments on this novel which are important to our purpose. Its weakness is the use of a romantic love story as the unifying force, and this weakness is only in part repaired by the shrewd conversion of the romantic convention into a symbol of the collapsing social system. No one denies that men and women love one another in war time or that the pattern and habit of the emotions may be proof even against war. But the experience of war is so overwhelming that anyone's private concerns must seem trivial when out of relationship to it. The war itself may best be realized in the individual, but the essence of the realization is the individual as an item in the greater experience. Thus unquestionably the Confederacy and the war are memorable here just because James Fraser is memorable as they affect his life, but just as unquestionably he would not be memorable if the reader were not impelled to move from him into the larger idea. And in that larger idea it cannot matter much that a man was in love with a woman throughout this national agony. The romantic convention cheapens its context.

The novel's marked strength is what I have called realization. Focusing on these people in these experiences, Mr. Boyd persuades us into accepting and understanding not them alone but their time as well. Why yes, this is the way it must have been, this is *right*, and in these particular people we see the Civil War. We have to use phrases without exact meaning, but you will understand when I call this historical imagination.

Have we not expressed a dilemma? On the one hand, the distinction of the book comes from its animation of past time in such a way that we believe this is what must have been, these are people acting as they must have done in these circumstances. On the other hand, this realism is somewhat falsified by the use of a convention. That is the unresolved conflict that criticism finds in the book, and it is the basic dilemma of historical fiction.

For literature, it is significant that this historical fiction has developed dreams and ideas. In the last generation, with an almost startling abruptness, the historical novel has grown up. Its maturity is evident in the novels I have mentioned. The ideas with which these novelists deal are important—when, before our time, has American historical fiction had important ideas? They are critical—when has it been critical before? They speculate about the meaning of our national past, and they bring to their speculation an experience pickled and seasoned in our war and post-war world. They import into the historical novel themes, subjects, inquiries, values, philosophies that had not been treated there up to now, that had been the property and occupation of other kinds of fiction. And also they bring to it a skill, a craftsmanship, that our historical fiction had never had before. These are good novelists, these are good novels, quite apart from their history. They ask no lenience or indulgence; we may judge them with the same tests we apply to all novels. For the first time the historical novel is a novel first of all.

The foregoing article is condensed from a lecture given at Harvard University.

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Academic Approach

MODERN SPAIN AND LIBERALISM: A Study in Literary Contrasts. By John T. Reid. Stanford University: Stanford University Press. 1937. $2.25.

Reviewed by ERNEST BOYD

IF a writer were to announce "The United States and Liberalism," and then compile a series of selected references to the subject taken exclusively from the works of Edith Wharton and Sinclair Lewis; if another were to compile a similar series of quotations from Bernard Shaw and Hilaire Belloc and call it "Modern England and Liberalism," what would the reader say? The least would be that the volume was a singularly otiose piece of academic pedantry and that it was utterly misleading as a general study of the ostensible subject, however painstaking the exposition by quotation of the two authors selected.

Mr. Reid, who is Instructor of Spanish at Stanford University, has done just that. He has taken Pío Baroja and Ricardo León, the two well-known Spanish writers, and quoted and footnoted them extensively, in order to contrast their views of liberalism. By so doing he curiously imagines that he has fulfilled the claim of his title. That, of course, is as impossible as it would be in the case of the American and English writers I have mentioned. Baroja has always been a Nietzschean iconoclast, León is an orthodox supporter of throne and altar, an ardent, not to say, fanatical, Catholic monarchist. At certain points both writers may be said to have expounded more or less conventional liberal ideas, but their agreements or divergencies of opinion do not by any means constitute them representative men of Spain today. Both, it so happens, are in opposition to the Loyalist government at this moment.

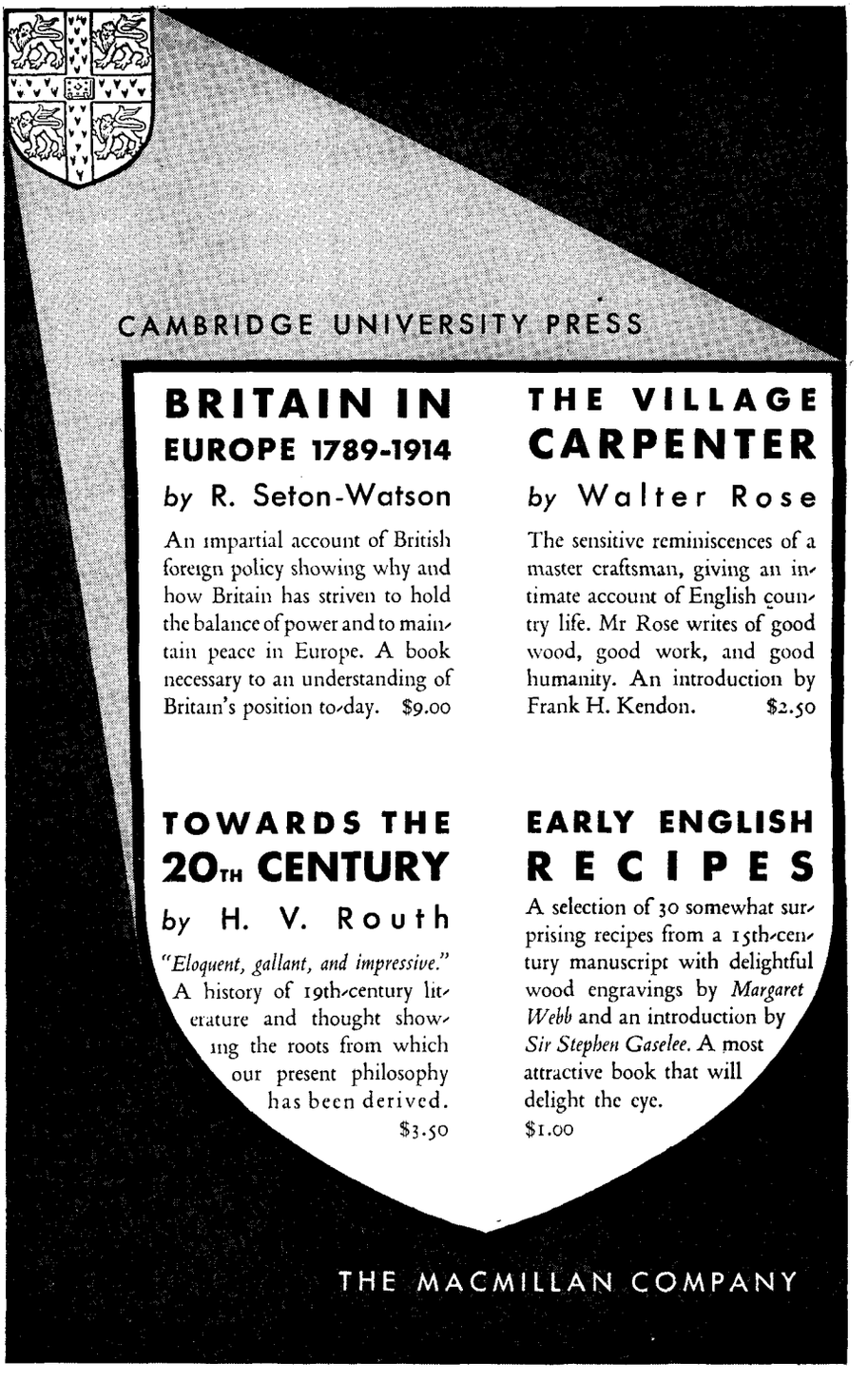
The same is true, incidentally, of all the older, outstanding figures in contemporary Spanish literature, dead or in exile, all of whom welcomed the abolition of the monarchy. Ramiro de Maeztu and the late Unamuno protested against the Popular Front, as did Pérez de Ayala, first republican ambassador to the Court of St. James's, Ortega y Gasset, and Madariaga, who occupied a similar post in Washington. All of these men, together with Baroja, represented the intellectual vanguard of liberalism in Spain, as distinct from the tendencies whose spokesman was Ricardo León. A study of this group and a couple of their predecessors might have more nearly fulfilled the promise of Mr. Reid's title. Although I doubt if his method would enlighten the average reader, beyond leaving him with the impression that the Spanish, like the Irish, are excessively individualistic and like to split up into factions.

For all his numbered references, Mr. Reid never condescends to refer to any English translations of the books he quotes, although many have been done into English. He seems unaware that Baroja was introduced years ago by Mencken, in "Youth and Egolatry," as a Spanish Nietzschean. He eschews completely all criticism in English of either Baroja or León. In short, a sadly academic compilation, which can be of little help to other than students of Spanish in search of a bibliography. The preliminary sketches, defining liberalism and outlining the events leading up the current *mêlée*, would suggest that this is intended as a classroom manual. Elementary, my dear Editor!

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 194)

MARGARET FULLER—TO R. W. EMERSON.

The worst of hearing Carlyle is that you cannot interrupt him. . . . If you get a chance to remonstrate for a moment, he raises his voice and beats you down. . . . It is the heroic arrogance of some old Scandinavian Conqueror.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American Empire

COLONIAL POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES. Theodore Roosevelt. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by FOSTER RHEA DULLES

NO greater change in the temper of public opinion has probably ever taken place than in our attitude towards overseas expansion. At the close of the past century, we enthusisatically swung in step with the march of imperialism; today the fruits of that brief adventure have a bitter taste. It was in a mood of mingled apathy and relief that we recently acceded to the demand of our most important colony for independence. Senator Beveridge's flamboyant statement thirty-seven years ago that the Power that rules the Pacific will rule the world "and, with the Philippines, that Power is and will forever be the American Republic," echoes hollowly from a vanished era in our national life.

This short but clarifying study of our colonial policies by Theodore Roosevelt offers striking evidence of how our attitude has changed. For the author's father was in the vanguard of American imperialism; he played an important role in the acquisition of Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Yet today the son questions the validity of the entire concept of colonialism. In so far as this country is concerned, he admits its failure. He flatly expresses his disbelief in our capability to realize such benefits as might accrue from colonial possessions, or to maintain a consistent, long-range colonial program.

There have been more comprehensive and analytical studies of our policy. From the historical point of view, Colonel Roosevelt's book is greatly limited. It is of very real value, however, as expressing the personal reactions of a man who has been both the governor of Puerto Rico, and the governor-general of the Philippine Islands. It is his idea that we have assumed certain responsibilities, particularly in binding our colonies so closely to our own national economy, which we cannot now avoid. Our possessions may be liabilities but we have not the right to cast them off. For both the Philippines and Puerto Rico, for the colonies of other countries, Colonel Roosevelt believes that organization on a dominion status may represent the ultimate solution.

This may or may not be true. Colonel Roosevelt is more successful in painting the failure of our colonial policy than in telling how we can extricate ourselves from present difficulties. For we are paying today for the grievous mistakes by which America for a time allowed herself to believe that democracy and a colonial empire could be reconciled.

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Sunspots and Electrons

SUNSPOTS AND THEIR EFFECTS. By Harlan True Stetson. New York: Whittlesey House. 1937. $2.

THESE AMAZING ELECTRONS. By Raymond F. Yates. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1937. $3.75.

Reviewed by JOHN RIORDAN

SUNSPOTS are giant cyclones in the sun's atmosphere, variable with the months and the years. In view of the dominating importance of the sun's radiation, correlation of this variability with weather, radio fading, plant growth, mass psychoses, and business cycles has been sought. Dr. Stetson, in the present small volume, presents a summary of this work together with the more directly astronomical work on the sunspots themselves.

Obviously, the scope of the book is of wide popular appeal, and Dr. Stetson writes to satisfy this audience. His style is readable, and he is the expositor, not the advocate, of the speculative and sometimes fanciful material he presents. In general, the more closely the phenomenon in question is related to the sun's radiation, the more reliable the correlation appears. But there are large gaps in the relations of greatest popular interest, like mass psychoses and business cycles. However, while tentative, speculation on these matters may be fun, and Dr. Stetson does his best to leave the final judgments to his readers.

Mr. Yates's book is a popular treatise on electrons and their applications. It contains a résumé of the part of physical theory concerned and many details of numerous applications, to medicine, radio, and sound, and in numerous industries. While undoubtedly the fruit of much labor, the first of these seems to lack the digested simplicity and authoritativeness found in Professor Robertson's recent "Atomic Artillery" on the same subject. The book is hampered throughout by a kind of *Time* excitability, exemplified by the use of adjectives like brutal, savage, and lethal applied to physical processes, and by the use of inverted sentences.

Authors of the Week

Angna Enters

Miss Enters's fifth exhibition of paintings in four years has opened (December 14th) at the Newhouse Galleries and her New York dance season begins on the 19th. She is an extraordinarily versatile character-sketch artist and dancer who has created a highly individual form of entertainment. She gathers her material from all over the world, having traveled in many countries, and her work has been presented for ten seasons in New York. Also her four New York exhibitions of paintings won her a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1934-5. She is her own musician, producer, and so forth—a one-woman theater, and she doesn't use any scenery! Her name is pronounced Anjna. It was once Anita. Of her youth all Miss Enters says is that she was in Chicago until about the age of fifteen, then for a short time in Washington, and came to New York to study painting at the Art Students' League in order to support herself. Then she began to work out pantomimes because she became interested, through painting, in what she calls "movements in composition." For a time she was with Michio Ito, the famous Japanese dancer, and then acted the part of a Japanese girl in a play with Fay Bainter. After that she fell on hard times and was reduced to doing lettering for printers and advertising agencies. Gradually she developed the idea of her Angna Enters Theatre, and for several years borrowed money to put on her inimitable shows. Then suddenly—success.

"First Person Plural," by Angna Enters, is reviewed on page 5.

Carl Crow

Carl Crow was born in Highland, Missouri, 1883. His father, a country schoolteacher, died when the son was sixteen, and Carl Crow began to earn his own living. From printer's apprentice he became a journeyman printer; then he founded a weekly newspaper, and managed to sell it at a profit. While doing the full course, at the age of thirty, at the University of Missouri, he was also local editor of the Columbia *Missourian* and correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*, St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, and Kansas City *Star*. Later he did journalism in Texas and finally landed in 1909 on *Hampton's Magazine* in New York. He first went to China in 1911 as city editor of the first American daily in China, the *China Press* published at Shanghai. In 1913 he went to Tokyo as business manager of the *Japan Advertiser*. He returned to New York, and when America entered the World War he was the owner of a profitable small fruit ranch. He then went back to China as head of the Far Eastern Division of the Committee on Public Information. He established and edited the *Shanghai Post*, but for the past half dozen years he has devoted his entire time to being an advertising agent and publishing two small magazines about travel in China. People constantly asked him how to sell goods over there, so he wrote his "400 Million Customers."

"I Speak for the Chinese," by Carl Crow, is reviewed on page 5.

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A Letter from France

BY ANDRÉ MAUROIS

THE influence and the renown of a writer depend no less upon his life than upon his work. The amorous adventures of a Byron or a Chateaubriand, and their political attitudes, as well as those of a Lamartine or a Hugo; the voluntary exile of Voltaire to Ferney; the seclusion of Flanbert, the flight of Rimbaud—all contributed to create lasting and striking pictures of them in the popular imagination. There are only three names in our time around which legend is forming, those of André Gide, André Malraux, and Henry de Montherlant. We shall pass by Malraux, who for the past year has deserted literature to give himself to action, a change quite within the romantic tradition, but the cases of Gide and of Montherlant merit attention.

It is impossible to understand Gide's life and thought without taking count of his puritan upbringing. He has himself described it in "Si le Grain Ne Meurt," an autobiography in which he attempts to show how he was, during his childhood, at once moved by the teachings of the gospels and wounded by the lessons they held for him. Ever since adolescence, Gide has sought for an evangelical perfection of which he has had a presentiment and caught a glimpse but rarely actually known, and which is represented, for example, by Alissa in "La Porte Etroite."

It is to the same cause that one must look for the psychological explanation of the conversion of Gide, the confirmed bourgeois, to communism. This conversion, which created so much furor, had been laid in train by a prolonged conflict between Gide and the bourgeois morality in which he had been raised. There comes to mind his: "Families, I hate you." Gide was not so much intrigued by Marxist philosophy as attracted by the hope of a new world, removed from the tenets from which he had suffered. But when he came into contact with the actual Russia, he was profoundly disappointed. And Gide was not the man to keep silent in the face of disillusionment. One of his striking traits is a refusal to allow himself to be bound by what he has once believed. "Un Esprit Non Prevenu" (A Mind Unshackled), is the title of one of his books. It was with an unshackled mind that he regarded the life of Soviet Russia. A first brief book, "Retour de l'U.R.S.S." set forth his caustic opinion, which he backed up with a second, "Retouches à Mon Retour de l'U.R.S.S.," when he was accused of having formed his judgments in that first without adequate proof.

The case of Montherlant is entirely different. At the beginning of his career he appeared to be a romantic, interested in action and struggle. An athlete, a soldier, a bullfighter, he had run races, waged combat, killed the bulls which he was later to describe in his writings. A long retirement to Africa held out prospect of some poem on the desert. But an unexpected Montherlant emerged from it. In a series of novels ("Jeunes Filles," "Pitié pour les Femmes," "Le Démon du Bien") he assumed the attitude of an arrogant and cynical Don Juan such as Byron had been during the second part of his life, and took pleasure in putting in opposition, as Bernard Shaw so often did, the egoism of woman and that of the artist, in each instance, whether consciously or unconsciously, defending the creative faculty. The success of these books was great, first because Montherlant is an admirable writer (he is a great reader of the best Latin prose-writers) whose nervous and classical French enchants us, but also because young girls and women are far from hating his type of misogynist.

In England and America Montherlant's four novels make a single volume of six or seven hundred pages. But the decided taste of the French public for short books has now for a long time forced our writers to divide their material into successive volumes each of which contains an episode of the chronicle.

Every year sees the appearance of one or two volumes of a long series. This method, excellent if the author has the necessary fecundity, is open to the objection of forcing the reader to wait so long between parts that on occasions he forgets the plot and characters.

There was a long period when the faithful readers of Roger Martin du Gard might well have feared that "Les Thibaults" would never be finished. The first volumes ("Le Cahier Gris" and "Le Pénitencier") won favor by their veracious, frank, and sober portrayal, the one of a Catholic childhood, the other of a Protestant. I was reminded, in reading these books, of the great Russians, Tolstoy and Chekov. And later on I liked the harsh but impressive description of illness and doctors in "La Mort du Père." Then came a serious accident, and Martin du Gard held silence for several years. It was a happy day when, some months ago during a visit I was making him in the South, he showed me the manuscript of "Les Thibaults" completed. The last part, entitled "Été 1914," describes the days preceding the declaration of war and the efforts of a group of men of all nationalities to prevent its outbreak. It has now become necessary to reread "Les Thibaults" from beginning to end in order to judge of its unity as a whole. At the moment that unity is not apparent, but perhaps it is true of Martin du Gard's work as of that of Proust that its direction only becomes obvious on a second reading.

The most extensive work of fiction that is still in process of creation is Jules Romains's "Les Hommes de Bonne Volonté" ("Men of Good Will"). When finished it will run to twenty volumes. In this case, too, one must wait until the monument is completed to judge of its artistic unity. But it has been pleasant each autumn to receive our annual ration. Powerful qualities demand admiration in Jules Romains: his lively feeling for the poetry of modern life (no one has better described the beauty of the Paris faubourgs), his far-reaching knowledge of a surprising number of groups and professions (his normal school students and his writers are true to life, but so also are his business men, his deputies, his pimps). Never since Balzac has a French novelist been familiar with so many diverse aspects of France. Romains is infinitely more genuine than Zola, who was a great epic poet but whose vision was warped; his is an honest and unshackled mind. In this day of violent political passions, where both camps all too easily lose their heads and substitute apocalyptic visions for realities, Jules Romains stands out as one of the strong spirits which force themselves, so far as it is within the power of a writer,

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to maintain peace both within and without.

Another great peacemaker is Georges Duhamel. He is publishing a long series of novels, "La Chronique de Pasquier," which constitute the history of a French family. There is in Duhamel the miniaturist, the satirist, and the moralist, an unusual and happy combination.

There still remain three books which I should like to recommend to our foreign friends. One has been out for a year, but its quality is such that no one ought to neglect it; it is "Le Journal d'un Curé de Compagne," by Bernanos. The second is "La Pêche Miraculeuse," in which Guy de Pourtalès has pictured the religious and emotional life in the puritan milieu which he knows so well. The third, François Mauriac's "Journal," is by an eminent novelist, but is not fiction. This lyrical prose is at its most vigorous and pliant when the author writes of happenings in the countries which are dear to him.

Sodbusters

THE SOD-HOUSE FRONTIER, 1854-1890. By Everett Dick. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1937. $5.

Reviewed by MARI SANDOZ

ANYONE at all familiar with the hodge-podge of source material of the period covered in this volume will understand that Dr. Dick's task was no easy one. Even the thousands of accounts, letters, documents, and newspapers of the time, with the later recollections and memoirs, leave large gaps. Often the material is full of ambiguities, half-statements, misinformation, and flat contradictions, with not a few deliberate misstatements, for public and private conscience seems to be built that way. Too, the frontier fondness for overstatement keeps cropping up, and the natural tendency of the memory to fictionize.

Here are the stories of the several land entry periods of the region, covering all the area stretching northward from the Cimarron to Canada, with the grafts, the speculations, the conflicts and the bitter disappointments; the building of the homes on the prairie—hay shelters, dugouts, and the sod-houses; the breaking of the earth; the growing of the crops and livestock, with the fights against drouth, flood, blizzard, hail, and prairie fire. Here, too, are the stories of community celebrations, always with sickness and accident and death just behind the next knoll. Then come the better times, with schools and churches and the railroad, the gang plow, the reaper and the combine, already shadowed by the gathering dusk of the early nineties. Always, too, Dr. Dick shows the undercurrents of conflict between man and man; the settlers with the Indians and the cattlemen, the rise of the vigilantes against the outlaws, the saloon troubles, and the election scandals.

Here, then, are hundreds of authentic stories of an American frontier, stories that, with little variation, repeated themselves from Indian Territory to Canada, until they attained a verity beyond and above fact. Mr. Dick has woven them into a coherent whole.

Architect of the Roman Empire

MARCUS AGRIPPA. By F. A. Wright. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

IT is a pleasure to meet Professor Wright again. His gently academic books will never be best sellers, yet he is a guide whose tolerance, scholarship, and grace of expression are an unfailing delight to every reader willing to venture into those unknown lands to which he holds the key. With him scholarship is not a means of piling up elaborate footnotes disagreeing with other writers' footnotes, but an illustrative support for the always fascinating and often astounding deductions he makes about the thoughts and actions of those men of antiquity of whose lives we really know so little.

This time it is Marcus Agrippa. The deduction, in Professor Wright's best manner, is that the Roman Empire was not founded by Augustus but by a committee of three in which Mæcenas was the financier and diplomat, Agrippa the architectural brain, and Augustus merely the moderator. He points out that Augustus never won a battle or a campaign and Agrippa never lost one; that the portions of Europe upon which Rome left the deepest and most lasting impress were exactly those in each of which Agrippa spent several years, organizing everything from the religious establishment to the highway system; that most of the great physical monuments of the Augustan age were built not only under the direction of Agrippa but with Agrippa as architect-in-chief; and that Agrippa alone among Romans understood that the *pax Romana* depended ultimately upon Roman ability to control and render safe sea transport in the Mediterranean.

One hardly realizes at first how revolutionary this theory is. It is offered in 262 pages of the most urbane narrative and unforced demonstration. Having heard it, one wishes avidly for more detail—specifically how did Agrippa accomplish the military and mechanical miracles no one else could approach? how did he integrate the Roman legal system with the local institutions of tribal Gaul? how administer the sea-police system? how solve the tidal problem in the construction of Portus Juliense? how talk, act, what did he eat for breakfast?

Mystery. But it is not Professor Wright's mystery, though he has so little taste for military matters that it does not occur to him that Agrippa's campaign in the Cantabrian Mountains was one of the most difficult and startling operations in the history of war, and so little taste for the raree-show that it does not strike him that the stories of Empress Livia's infidelities are worth more than a high-minded sniff. The mystery is that of the whole Roman world, built by men interested only in the *fait accompli*, which always tells us what but never how.

Professor Wright himself is aware of its relation to his subject. With all the immense scholarship at his disposal, in spite of the fact that he is dealing with one of the most important figures of human history, he is forced to fill out the pages of a brief book with such matter as Henry James's description of the Pont du Gard and Ann Bridge's meditations on the geology of Illyria. This makes "Marcus Agrippa" a lesser work than the same author's "Alexander," for which the source material was more abundant; yet no one can read either without interest and few without excitement.

Floundering through the Russian Upheaval

ONCE A COMMISSAR. By Vladimir Koudrey. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by EUGENE LYONS

THE acrid flavor of the first chaotic years of the Russian revolution is in this unpretentious narrative by Vladimir Koudrey. Having read a great many memoirs of the Russian upheaval, I picked up "Once a Commissar" expecting yet another variation on the familiar theme of heroism and horror. It was a pleasant shock to find, instead, a simple personal story simply told, without posturing or melodrama. The excitement and emotion are in the events recorded and not in the writing, which remains subdued and almost artless throughout.

Mr. Koudrey's boyhood memories include conspiratorial meetings at the home of his mother and his stepfather, who was no less a Bolshevik than Leonid Krassin, and glimpses of underground revolutionary figures like the mysterious terrorist Kamo. But for the most part he lived with his father, a professor of dead languages; his own leanings were toward the stage; and when the revolution came he found himself among the bewildered mass of uprooted intellectuals. He was about twenty-two at the time, sympathetic to the revolution but exasperated by the havoc it worked in his life.

More concerned with his private survival than with the fate of the revolution, he was sucked into its torrents all the same, whirled through fantastic adventures in the civil wars, tasting the bitterness and a little of the thrill, too, of that period. He was neither a communist sacrificing himself for a cherished cause nor a "boorzhooy" struggling against it. He was merely one of the in-between millions, the ordinary men and women without deep social convictions groping desperately for a handhold as they were being swept along. In this fact lie the strength and significance of his narrative. Through one man's wanderings and preoccupations with immediate problems of food and jobs we feel the impact of a great revolution upon the common man.

Eventually he went to London to work with the Soviet trade mission headed by Krassin. He knew that the revolution, good, bad, or indifferent, was not for him. "I was only an ordinary human being who had floundered through the revolution like a dazed newt, lucky to be belched out instead of being squashed," he writes. The flounderings make an unforgettable story, beautifully told.

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The New Books

Fiction

MANHATTAN NIGHTS. By Faith Baldwin. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

There is a "portrait gallery" of the chief characters in the front of this latest book of Miss Baldwin's; and it is extraordinary how clever the artist has been in making the same face look like fourteen different faces. Miss Baldwin as a writer has the same cleverness: she has imagined a number of scenes and situations of considerable interest, and it is only with reluctance and a sense of ingratitude that one acknowledges how small is the stock company which plays all the parts.

"Manhattan Nights"—which consists of eight short stories more or less connected through characters common to all—is a panorama of New York since "the shrill fat years." Though romance is her chief preoccupation in almost every story, Miss Baldwin is very conscious of the changes in the social set-up. Here, securely installed as commonplaces of even the most romantic fiction, are the phenomena of an era of transition: the dissatisfactions of the rich, the desperations of the middle classes, the conversion of the honest working-man into the bitter enemy of society. But though her plots take cognizance of social revolution, and few of her characters are untouched by their times, marriage rather than Marxianism brings about her solutions. All of her nights end as wedding nights—all except two, and they are nights of reunion.

However, Miss Baldwin annihilates critical analysis by the pleasure she so lavishly gives. Much intelligence and skill go into the drawing of Miss Baldwin's types and their setting. She makes touching and lively the situations which confront us daily, and she has to a high degree the knack of overhearing and rendering all sorts of current patters. One is dimly aware that the changes in her characters are somewhat abrupt and sweeping; the happy ending rather loses force by its inevitability, but does it matter? If after writing twenty-five books she can still triumph over experience—her own and the reader's—so much the better.

K. S.

O. HENRY MEMORIAL AWARD PRIZE STORIES OF 1937. Edited by Harry Hansen. Doubleday, Doran. 1937. $2.50.

The O. Henry Memorial Award Committee, of which Harry Hansen is chairman, gives three prizes every year to the stories they adjudge the best by American authors which have appeared in American magazines from June to June. This year the three prizes were awarded as follows: First, to Stephen Vincent Benét for "The Devil and Daniel Webster," published in the *Saturday Evening Post.* Second, to Elik Moll for "To Those Who Wait," published in *Scribner's Magazine.* Third, to Robert M. Coates for "The Fury," published in *The New Yorker.* Mr. Benét's story has now appeared also in his selected short stories, "Thirteen O'Clock." Other stories that ran close, and that also appear in the O. Henry volume are "The Gladiator," by J. M. McKeon, "To the North," by Nancy Hale, "Job's Tears," by James Still, "Whip-Poor-Willie," by Jesse Stuart (these last two authors being Kentucky friends), "Gods of Darkness," by Charles Hilton, "The Saluting Doll," by Hamlen Hunt, and "Man Among Men," by Katharine Patten. Eleven stories beside these round out the volume, including tales by William March and John O'Hara. A story by Katherine Anne Porter was also to be included but formed too integral a part of her forthcoming volume. The committee's choice for first prize was unanimous. America has every reason to be proud of the art displayed in the short-story medium by the stories in this collection. There is much variety, and *Story* and *Yankee* have each contributed several examples.

L. C. H.

Juvenile

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS. Adapted from Grimm by Walt Disney. Harpers. 1937. $2.

This is the complete story as used by Walt Disney, and adapted from Grimm's fairy-tales for the purposes of the screen. It is illustrated with original drawings from the Walt Disney talking picture. Everyone knows what unique and delightful pictures the Walt Disney studios make, and any small child would be entranced with the black and white and colored illustrations to this fine fairy story. The little animals in it, alone, are worth the price of the book. Never were there such beguiling bunnies, fawns, and squirrels! This is one of those square, flat picture-books, to be read aloud from. The text is simple and direct.

W. R. B.

Miscellaneous

WHY NOT ENJOY LIFE? By Agnes Rogers. Harpers. 1937. $1.75.

Are we as unhappy a people as the staggering sales success of how-to-live books suggests? It would seem as if anyone beyond the age of twenty must have found out for himself most of the recipes for a good life advanced recently with such exuberant confidence by our kindergarten philosophers. But there is no appeasing the appetite of the wistful.

Happily this latest addition to the self-help series eschews "philosophy" and is chock full of that common sense which we are told is the rarest of human qualities. There isn't a thing the matter with it. It is Dorothy Dix for the graduating class. In lively, vigorous terms it tells us everyday people how to handle our jobs, our money, our fun, our consorts, our children, our servants, and if when you have finished it, you say, "yes, but I've done all that and I still can't forget about Spain and China and my relief neighbor with nine children," then this book wasn't written for you.

It is directed primarily at those who are vaguely dissatisfied, who have succumbed to the Christian virtue-vice of resignation, and its slogan is the bracing one, "alter your circumstances or make the best of them." We agree with everything the author says. We even applaud it. But we have never known a person who learned to enjoy life from a book—even so sensible a book as this—and we strongly suspect that if the art is to be acquired from the printed word it must ingratiate itself indirectly and even through the "inspiration" this author disclaims for her effort.

M. S. U.

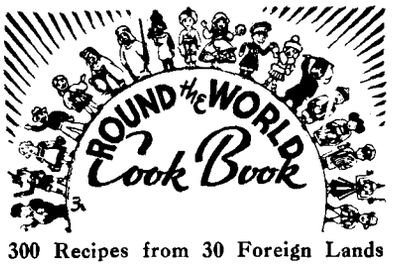
Poetry

COLD MORNING SKY. By Marya Zaturenska. Macmillan. 1937. $1.50.

Miss Zaturenska's second volume is a finer collection in every way than her first book, "Threshold and Hearth." It has all the subtlety of her first offering, but it is a clarified subtlety; the stripped line, the sharpened image, the clean phrases are here, but they are rounded and enriched with a new mellowness. Maturity may be the word for this enrichment, but it is more like a serene and steadily growing warmth of spirit.

In style Miss Zaturenska is a combination of Léonie Adams and Louise Bogan. She has the verbal chastity of Miss Adams, but she is less abstract than that fine and visionary poet; she has the precise, sometimes Yeatsian, accent of Miss Bogan, but the speech seems quicker and the feeling more spontaneous and affirmative.

For all its variety in theme, this is an unusually integrated poetry, firm, refined, and, at times, a little too rarefied. But, though the emotion in "Cold Morning Sky" is low-pitched, it is not low in vi-



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brance. It never fails to find its proper setting and its exact utterance. Those excessive scholiasts of the new order who insist that personal emotion is played out and that, hence, lyric poetry is dead, will have to revise their dogmas if they honestly appraise this poetry. It is for those who prefer nobility to prettiness, true fastidiousness to beribboned elegance. Without program or pretentiousness, it revives, or, rather, continues the authentic lyric note for which no school or system has ever invented a substitute.

L. U.

THE WITCH OF ENDOR. By Alice Du Pont Ortiz. Boston: Christopher Publishing House. 1937. $1.50.

This brief book of poems is clearly meant to be read, which distinguishes it from a good many books of poems of the last year. It is not only meant to be read, but it is readable, in part because of the author's easy rhythms, in part because of a faculty she has for imparting a sense of mingled beauty and the macabre to her poems, which are in many instances really short stories in verse. Her publishers compare her work to that of Poe, but this is not a happy comparison. If she belongs to any school it is that of the Pre-Raphaelities, for she has their vividness and their fascination with the pictorial quality of a romantic narrative. Her technique of language is not always equal to the fluency of her rhythms. Yet her book is neither old-fashioned nor modernistic, and that, for those who are interested in the reading of poetry, is perhaps praise.

H. S. C.

Science

GRASSROOT JUNGLES. By Edwin Way Teale. Dodd, Mead. 1937. $3.75.

Mr. Teale shows how rewarding entomological explorations may be even if carried on close to home. While his subjects are mainly frequenters of the grass blades and meadow bloom or of the soil from which these spring, a few have their pasturage in the leafy trees, and many of them have been viewed, if not interviewed, even by the casual observer. It is Mr. Teale's accomplishment to make the reader really acquainted with them—not only with their bizarre shapes and beautiful patterns but with their far more interesting habits and startling life histories. Many of the facts are drawn from the investigations of others—that is inevitable in a subject so ramified as entomology—but the book is also richly supplied with the personal observations of one who has lived alertly with nature. The style is captivatingly vivid. It is so completely non-technical that the reader will stub his tongue on fewer scientific names than an insect has legs. A few errors have slipped in, but in general the book is accurate.

The text represents only half of the author's contribution. There are 130 superb illustrations. To those who know the difficulties of photographing insects and spiders in their natural environment, the technical perfection and informative character of these photographs will seem achievements of the first order.

H. F. S.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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"L'ILLUSTRATION," Christmas number, foremost French weekly, profusely illustrated, nearly 100 colorprints, all suitable for framing. DE-LUXE EDITION, $2.50. FRENCH BOOK COMPANY, 556 Madison Avenue, "New York's LARGEST French Bookshop." Mail order catalogue 20c. (stamps). "Over 500,000 French Books in stock."

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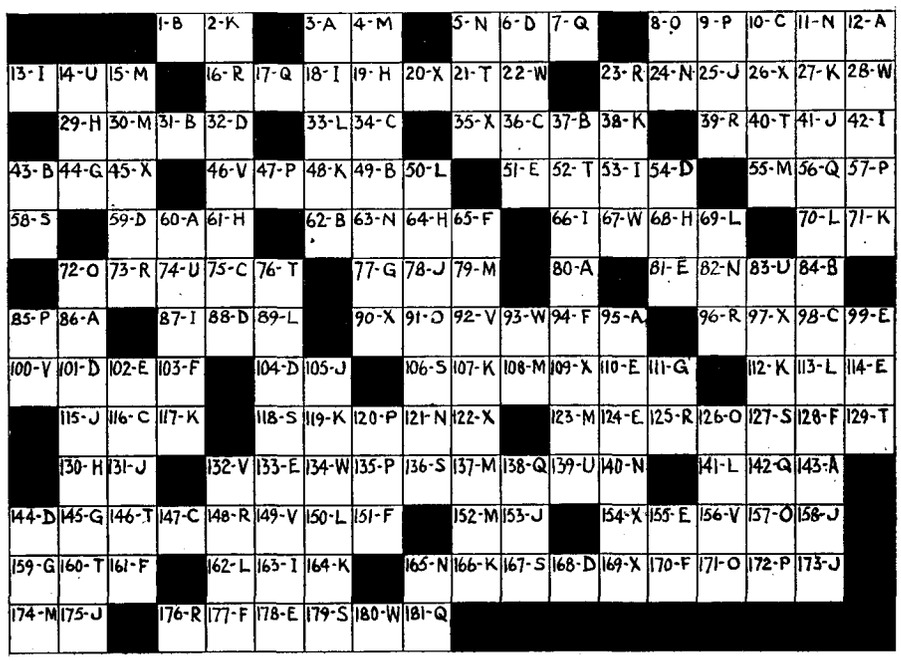
Double-Crostics: No. 195

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary.

The Solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Excess; redundancy.

B. Abide within.

C. Campanile.

D. Syllabic syncope.

E. Be more important than.

F. Educated.

G. Odysseus's dog (Odyssey).

H. German victory over Austria (1866).

I. Foolish talk.

J. Tousled, disordered (a nonce word) (comp.).

K. Blown out or away.

L. Withering; wasting away.

M. Russian moderate liberals of 1905.

N. Novice; beginner.

O. Duped.

P. Workshop; studio.

Q. Not at all.

R. Intrude.

S. Bearing; deportment.

T. American portrait painter (1856-1925).

U. Hero of drama by Schiller.

V. Orifices.

W. Secret, private.

X. Passive permission.

WORDS

60 80 12 3 143 86 95

1 43 84 62 49 37 31

10 75 36 147 116 34 98

88 59 144 54 6 32 104 168 101

155 99 133 124 110 81 178 114 102 51

94 177 170 65 128 103 151 161

159 145 44 77 111

68 64 61 130 29 19

13 53 42 87 163 66 18

41 25 175 153 158 115 78 131 105 173

117 107 71 166 27 119 48 112 2 164 38

141 70 33 89 50 150 69 113 162

152 108 55 174 123 15 30 4 79 137

5 121 82 165 63 140 24 11

72 91 171 157 126 8

47 120 9 57 85 135 172

181 56 7 142 138 17

148 176 125 23 96 73 39 16

118 127 58 167 106 179 136

76 146 129 21 52 160 40

139 14 83 74

149 132 156 100 46 92

134 67 180 28 22 93

35 97 154 26 45 122 169 20 90 109

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A prize of $1,500.00 is being offered by the Duke University Press for a scholarly manuscript in the fields of the social, artistic, or literary history of the United States, in connection with the Centennial of the origins of Trinity College which is now part of Duke University. The award will be made on March 1st, 1939.

Any scholar in the United States, except members of the Faculty of Duke University, is eligible to compete.

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Manuscripts must be submitted no later than October 1, 1938, and should be addressed to the Duke University Press. The authors are requested to keep copies of the manuscripts submitted since there can be no positive guarantee against loss.

A Committee of the Duke Faculty will select from all manuscripts entered the three which, in their opinion, seem most worthy of the prize. The final selection of the prize-winning manuscript will be made by a Committee of three distinguished scholars not connected with Duke University.

Full particulars for this contest may be had by writing to the Duke University Press, Durham, N. C., or found in the latest issues of the following periodicals it publishes: *American Literature, The Hispanic American Historical Review, The South Atlantic Quarterly,* and *Character and Personality.*

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

AMONG Christmastime adventures, it was a thrill to find one of the most remarkable collections of Walt Whitman that we have ever seen, in the office of a textile manufacturer on Fifth Avenue. This gentleman, sensible fellow, keeps his treasures right in the office with him where he can refer to them at any moment in working hours. ☞Another happy chance was to find ourself rambling on Park Street, Boston, in the tranquillity of a cold Sunday morning, enjoying the clangor of church bells and the fat purple pigeons on the Common. Park Street changes little: the old clock with the swivelling pendulum is still going in Bond's chronometer shop (established 1793). Holman's print shop is in the basement where Goodspeed sold books from 1898 to 1930. Little packets of lavender are still sold by pavement merchants and in the window of DeWolfe & Fiske we learn that the *Old Farmer's Almanac* is now in its 146th year. ☞Round the corner on Beacon Street we always look with admiration at the good gray Athenaeum library which has such an air of literary secrecy and discretion. ☞In Goodspeed's Beacon Street window saw a set of *Purchas: His Pilgrims* which made us wish to compile a Christmas List of *Pilgrim: His Purchases.* ☞One suggestion should certainly be *Dreamthorp* by Alexander Smith. We have mentioned it here, at this season, these many years, but it still has new friends to make. How pleased we were when Vernon Clapp, in the remoter parts of Ontario, sent us Frederick Niven's piece about Alexander Smith written for the Toronto *Saturday Night.* Niven, a Scot now living in British Columbia, describes how he once made pilgrimage to Smith's grave in Warriston cemetery, Edinburgh. "For the Scot abroad," Niven says, "perhaps not Sir Walter himself can more surely, by the magic of words, conjure home to their dreaming eyes." ☞And the essay on Christmas (in *Dreamthorp*) has its appeal to men of every or any race. ☞At the Old Corner Book Store in Boston Dick Fuller showed us the remarkable album of publicity gathered by the Boston Book Fair, whose record of attendance was even more remarkable (considering relative population) than that in New York. Among much unusual correspondence caused by the Boston Fair was a letter from a manufacturer in Rochester who has invented a bronze urn in the shape of a book, and suggests that the ashes of departed friends (or authors) be kept on your library shelves along with the first editions. These he calls "Publicated Memorials."

☞The title of *North to the Orient,* in the land of Kinder, Küchen, and Kirche, is *Ich Fliege Mit Meinem Mann.* ☞Another little spark from Agnes Repplier's emery, of which we were speaking last week: "Cheerfulness and melancholy can be, and usually are, equally odious; but a sad heart and a gay temper hold us in thrall." ☞A book that sounds alluring is E. E. Stoll: *Shakespeare's Young Lovers,* three lectures given at the University of Toronto. (Oxford Press, $2). ☞A valuable addition to bibliographical and literary resources is the new *Huntington Library Quarterly* whose first number appeared in October. Subscriptions are $5 per year; the magazine will be devoted primarily to articles based on the researches of scholars in that famous library's varied collections. ☞Speaking of libraries, Austin K. Gray's *Benjamin Franklin's Library* (Macmillan, $2) is lively reading: a history of the famous Library Company of Philadelphia, founded by Ben Franklin when he was only 25. Mr. Gray tells us the agreeable legend that the statue of Ben over the door of the main building (Juniper and Locust Sts.) every night descends from its niche, walks round the Library, and sits on a fire-hydrant to drink a mug of beer—where it is joined by the ghost of Walt Whitman. ☞There never were any prettier gifts than the Mosher Books (odd to think that the famous old phrase has to be explained to the youngest generation) and Dauber & Pine, 66 Fifth Ave., are offering a large assortment "in Mint Condition, Reasonably Priced." The Scribner catalogues of rariora are always exciting: the latest lists a copy of Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy* signed by J. M. B. for Miss Boynton—who was, it appears, the secretary of Miss Maude Adams. Barrie's autograph inscription on the flyleaf is characteristic and recalls a scramble the three had in Ireland:—

"According to the Irish legend, Miss Boynton was a lady who accompanied her friends M.A. & J.M.B. in their famous ascent of the awful cliffs of Glendalough —Co. Wicklow, they being the two first persons to climb those precipices since the days of St. Kevin (500 A.D.). It seems that Miss Boynton, the moment she saw the cliffs declined with extraordinary moral courage to set forth on them and the rock on which she sat while reposing is still pointed out by the guides, as also the five marks her fingers made on this rock as she clung to it. Any one who puts his fingers in these dents can wish three times. While sitting there, waiting for her brave but foolhardy companions, Miss Boynton was fed by wild deer—admirers of her moral courage. A little distance away are the ruins of seven churches said to have been built by Miss Boynton with her own hands, on condition that she had not to climb the cliffs. They are a cure for headache and are known in the district as the Seven Churches of St. Boynton."

This—for $225—would gladden the Yule of some Barrie collector. It always does us good to remember that there are a great many people to whom (when they see something really desirable) $225 doesn't mean any more than $2.25 does to us. Please, printer, watch decimal points.

Erratum

In our issue of November 13, "The Polar Bear Twins," by Jane Tompkins, was erroneously listed as a Scribner publication. The book was published by Frederick A. Stokes Co.

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